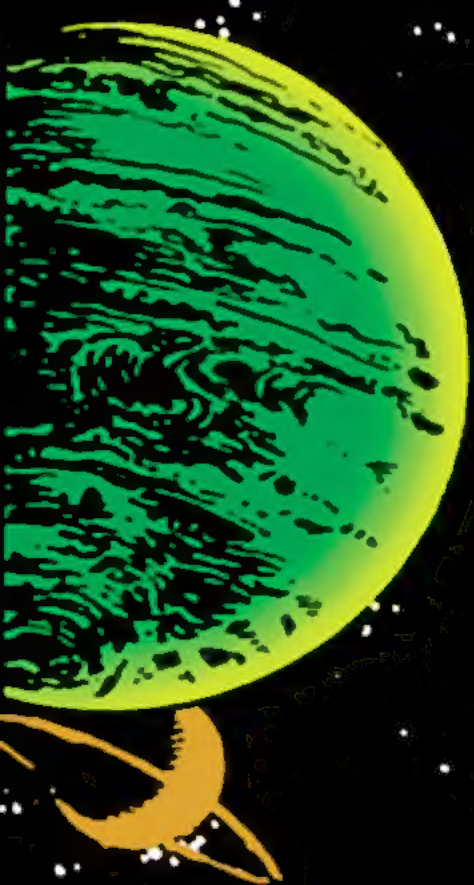


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# THE INFINITY GAUNTLET



COME  
AND GET  
ME!



GEORGE  
PETER

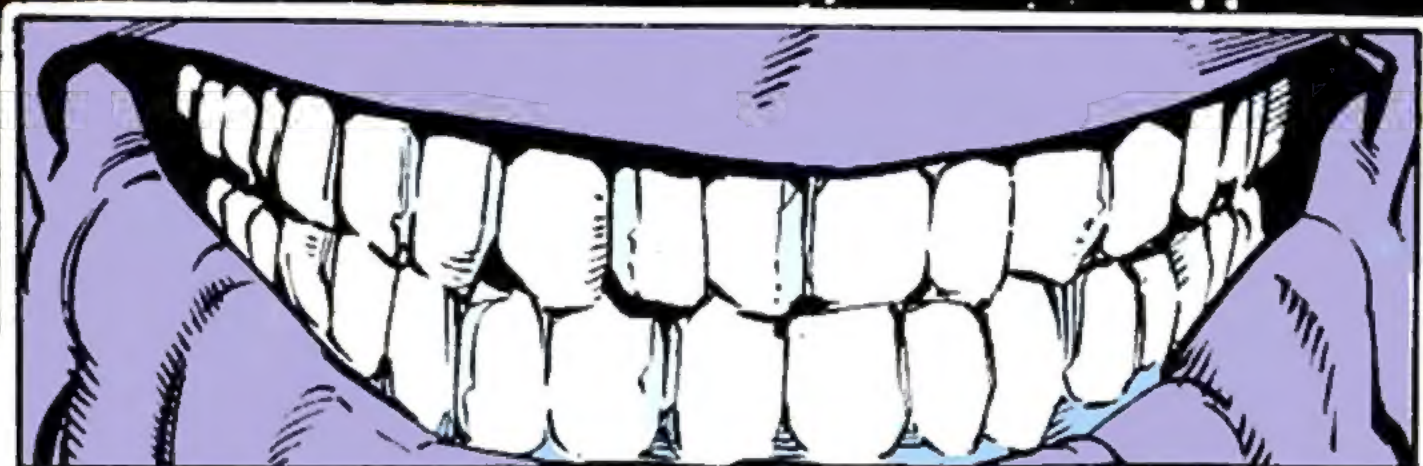




MY BROTHER,  
THANOS, IS  
INSANE...

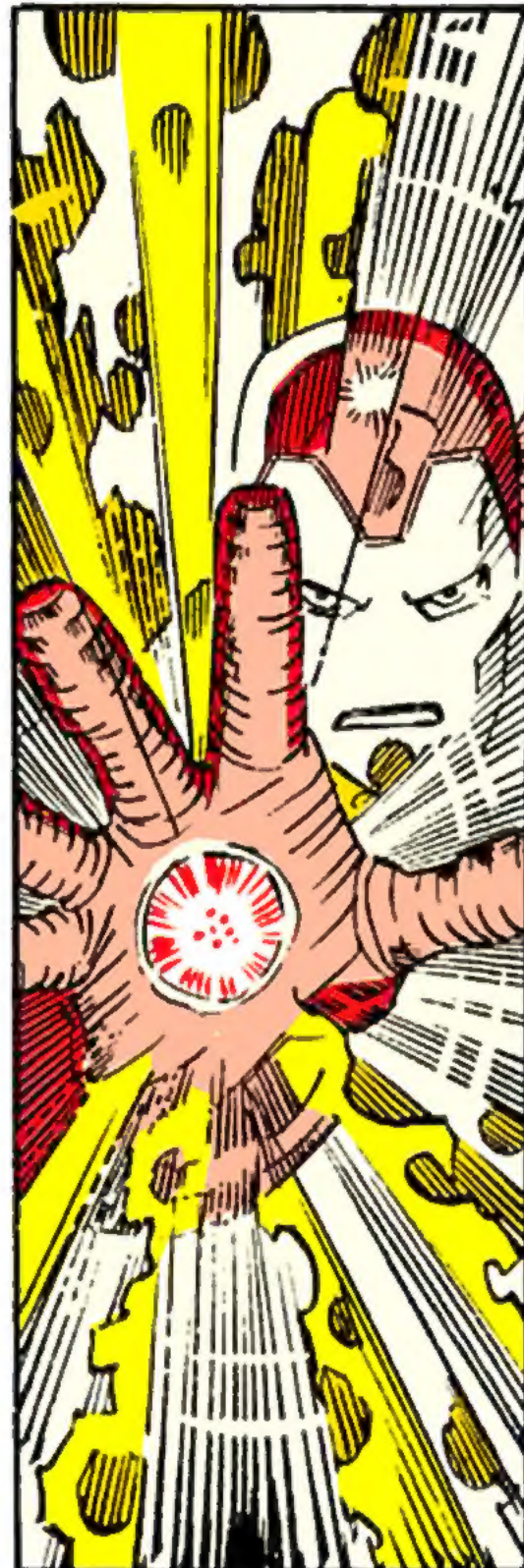
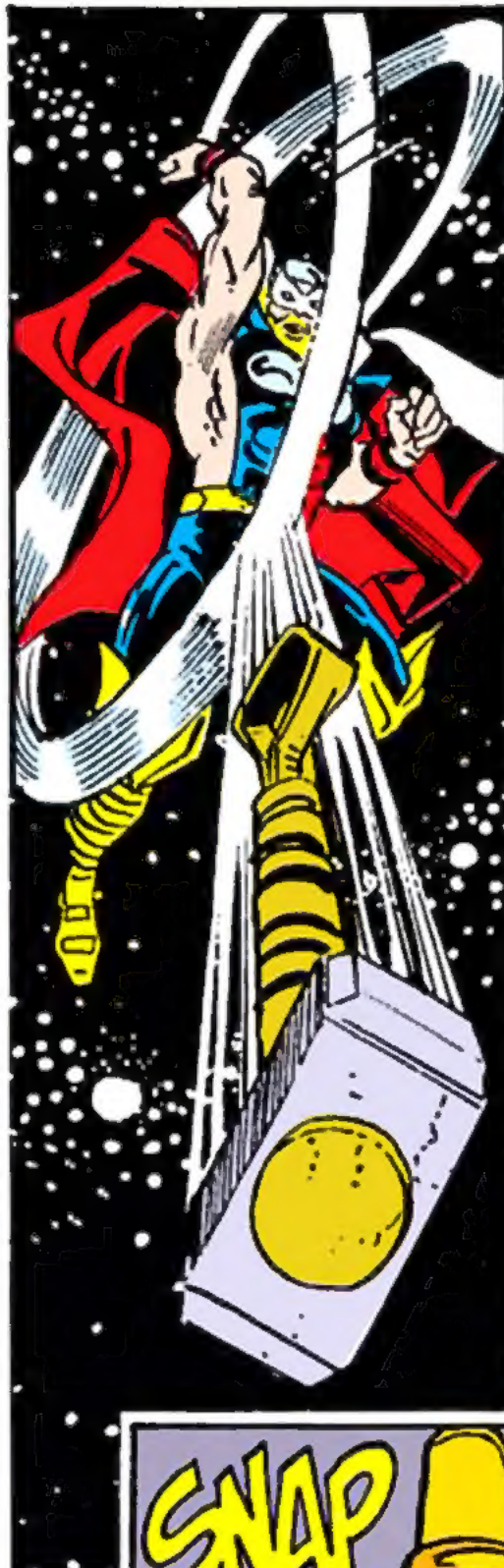
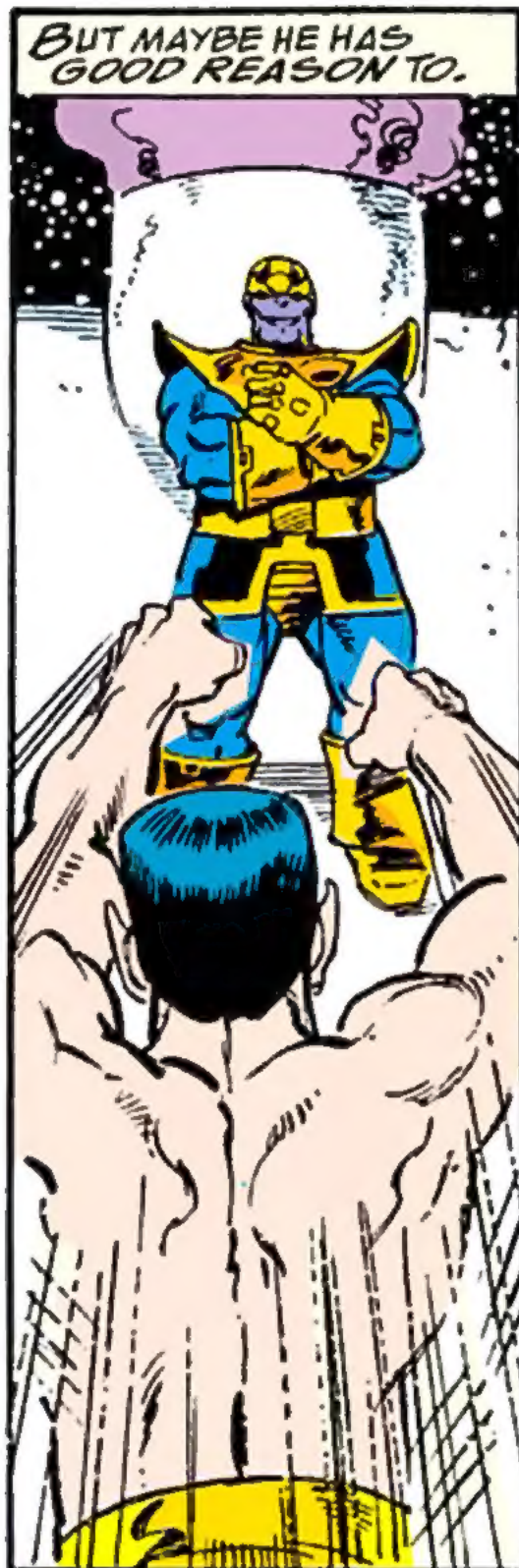
HE BEHOLDS FOUR OF THE  
EARTH'S MIGHTIEST  
HEROES-- THOR, FIRELORD,  
NAMOR AND IRON MAN  
POUNCING TO THE ATTACK...

...AND WHAT  
DOES HE DO?

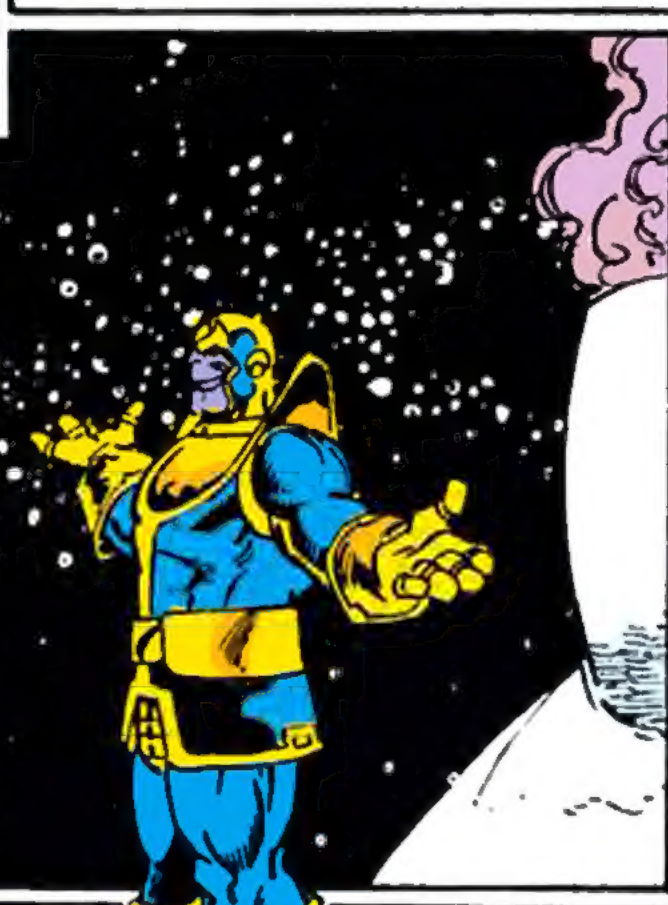
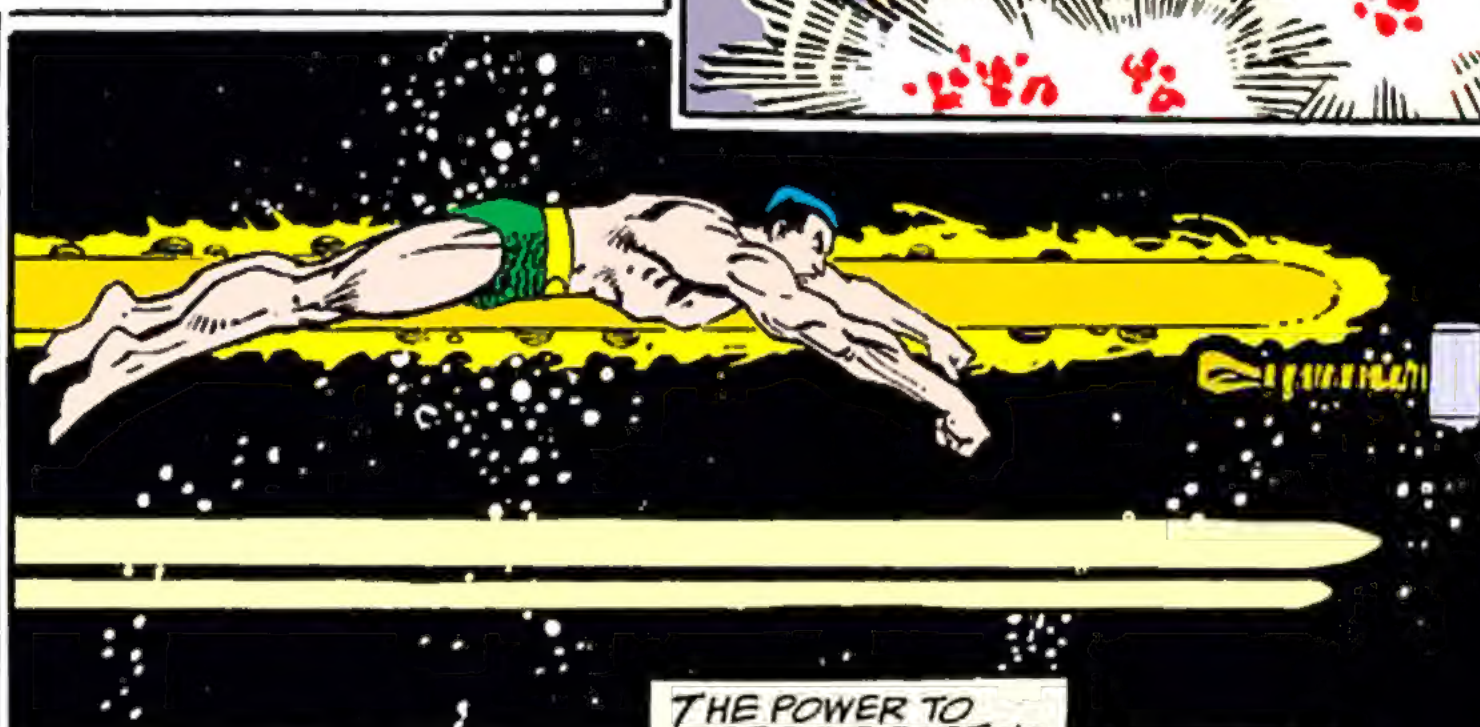
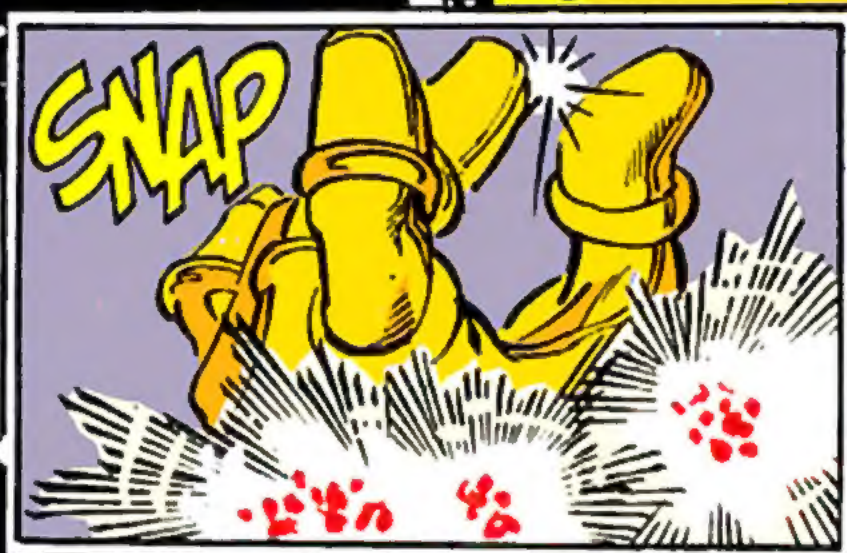


THE MADMAN  
SMILES.





POWER IS ONE THING  
THANOS HAS IN  
ABUNDANCE.



THE POWER TO  
FREEZE EARTH'S  
DEFENDERS IN  
TIME...



IT APPEARS THIS  
CONFLICT WILL  
NOT LIVE UP TO  
EXPECTATIONS...



...WILL NOT BE A...



JIM  
STARLIN  
WRITER

RON GEORGE  
LIM & PEREZ  
PENCILS

JOSEF  
RUBINSTEIN  
WITH BRUCE N. SOLOTOFF  
INKS

SCHEELE/LAUGHLIN  
COLORS  
CRAIG ANDERSON  
EDITOR

JACK MORELLI  
LETTERS  
TOM DEFALCO  
CHIEF



OF COURSE, THANOS HAS SPARED HIS  
ENTOUCRAGE THE INDIGNITY OF BEING  
RIPPED LOOSE FROM THE TIME FLOW.

MEPHISTO...

MISTRESS  
DEATH...

NEBULA...

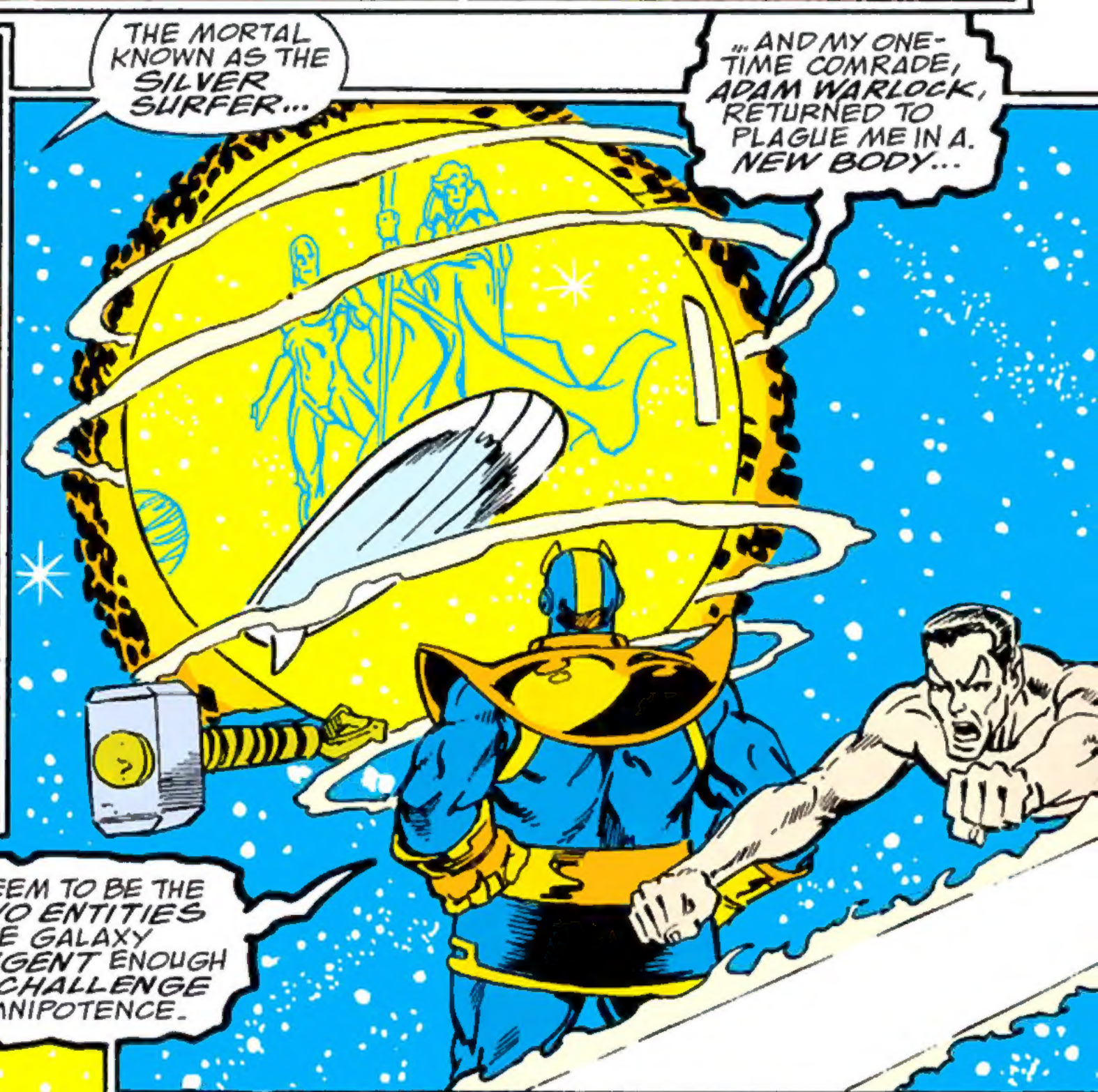
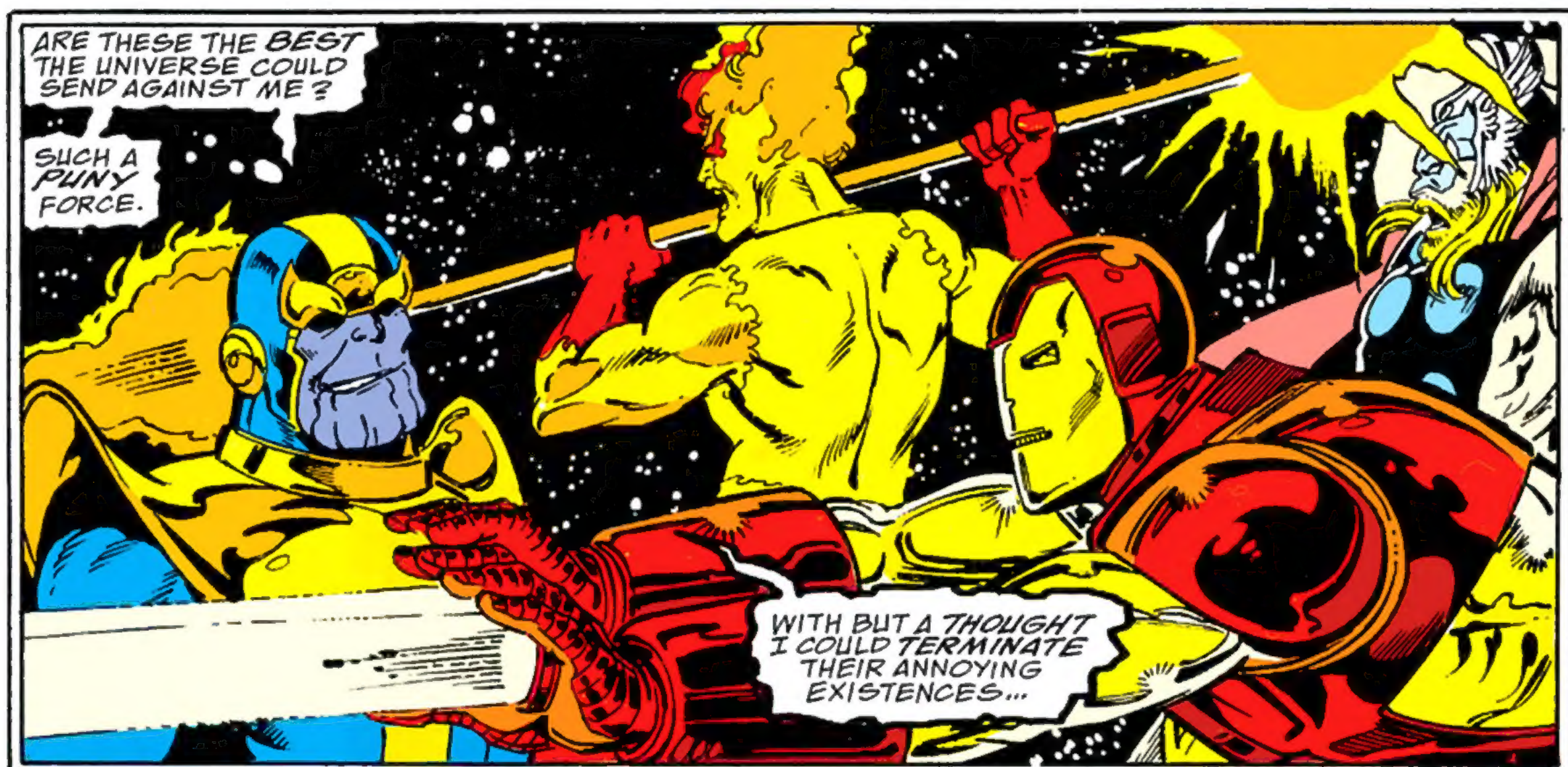
TERRAXIA...

...AND MYSELF,  
EROS.

EVEN THE ENIGMATIC  
WATCHER WAS SPARED.

WHAT USE  
IS GODHOOD  
IF YOU HAVE  
NO AUDI-  
ENCE TO  
FLAUNT IT  
BEFORE.









YOU HAVE POWER WITHOUT LIMIT.

YET STILL YOU FAIL TO WIN MISTRESS DEATH'S HEART.

THESE BUFFOONS MAY PROVE USEFUL IN CHANGING THAT SITUATION.

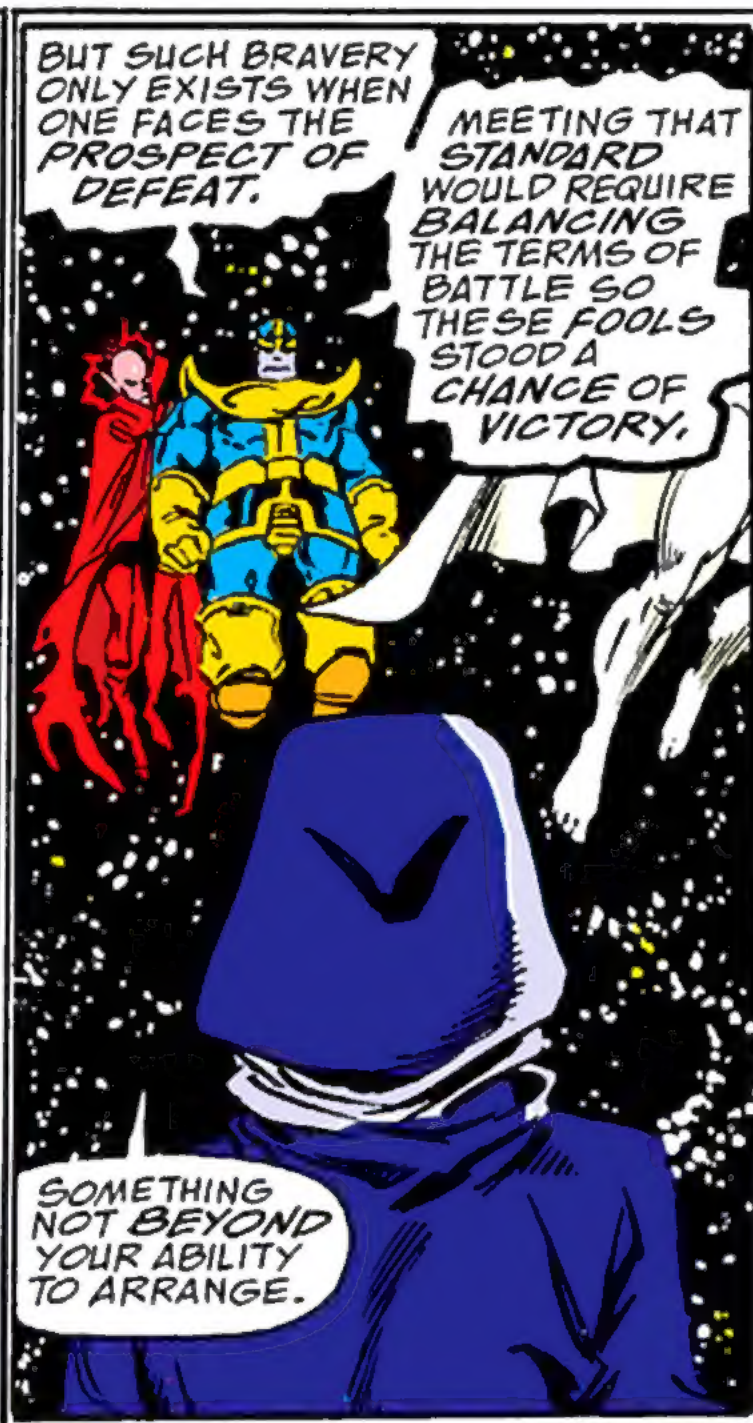


HOW SO?

COURAGE, MY LIEGE.

ALL FEMALE HEARTS, EVEN ONE AS COLD AS DEATH'S, ARE WARMED BY THE SIGHT OF RAW COURAGE.

COURAGE SUCH AS IS EXHIBITED IN BATTLE.



BUT SUCH BRAVERY ONLY EXISTS WHEN ONE FACES THE PROSPECT OF DEFEAT.

MEETING THAT STANDARD WOULD REQUIRE BALANCING THE TERMS OF BATTLE SO THESE FOOLS STOOD A CHANCE OF VICTORY.

SOMETHING NOT BEYOND YOUR ABILITY TO ARRANGE.



YES.



YES... YES I CAN DO IT!

I NEED ONLY TO CUT MYSELF OFF FROM ALL SENSORY INPUT FROM TIME, SPACE, REALITY, THOUGHT AND THE SOUL.

I WOULD RETAIN LIMITLESS POWER, YET NOT KNOW MY ENEMIES' NEXT MOVE.



THAT WOULD ALLOW THEM A .05% CHANCE FOR VICTORY!

...NOT THE GREATEST ODDS IN THE UNIVERSE...

...BUT PERHAPS GOOD ENOUGH TO IMPRESS MISTRESS DEATH.

WHAT GAME IS MEPHISTO PLAYING HERE?

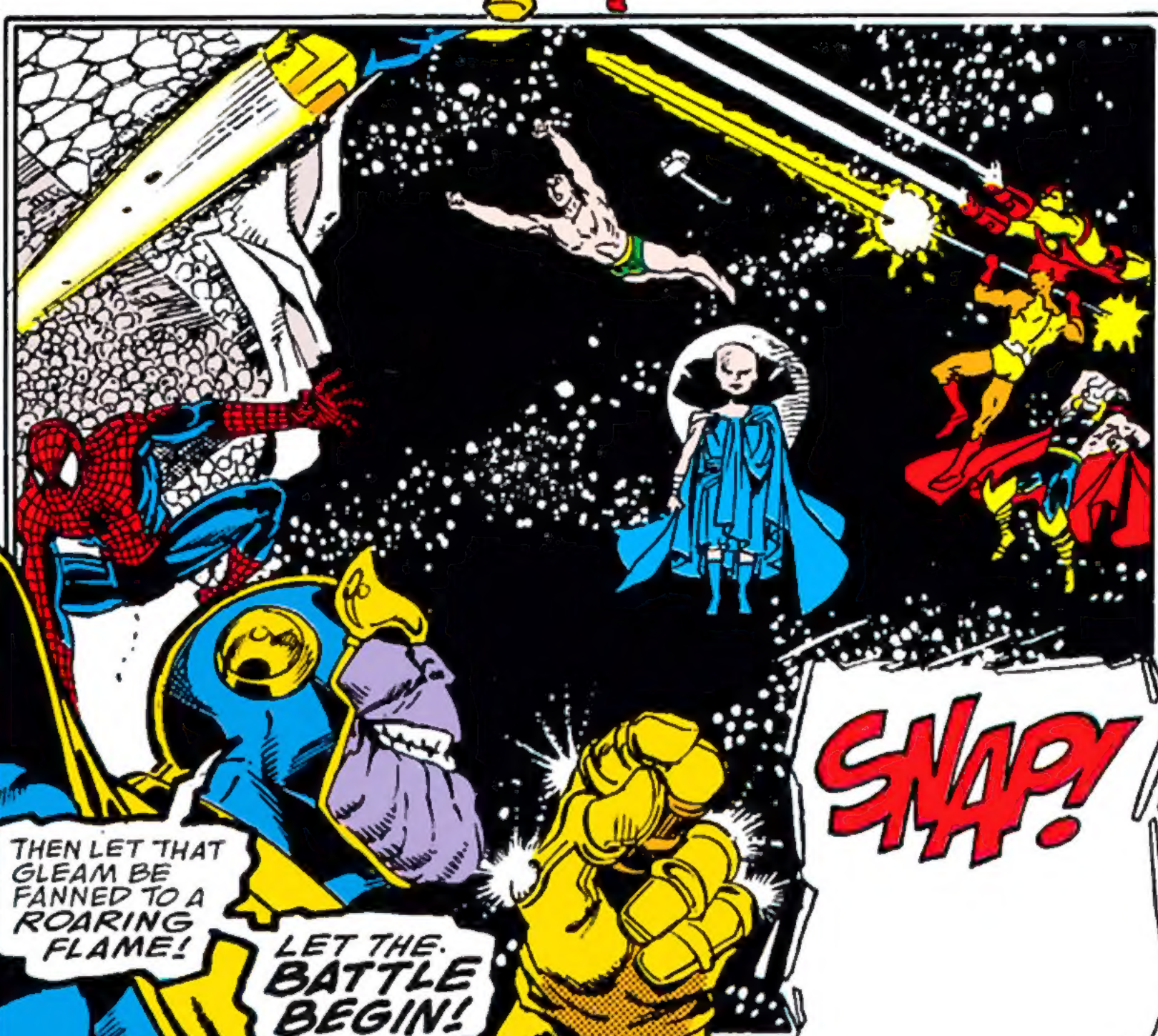
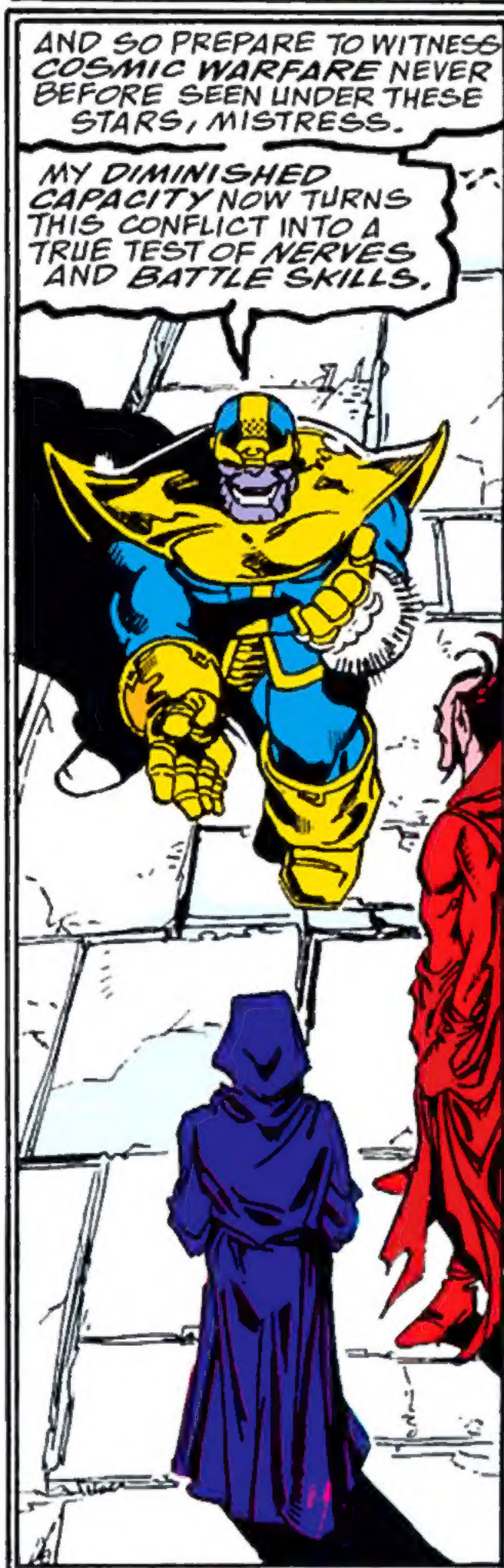
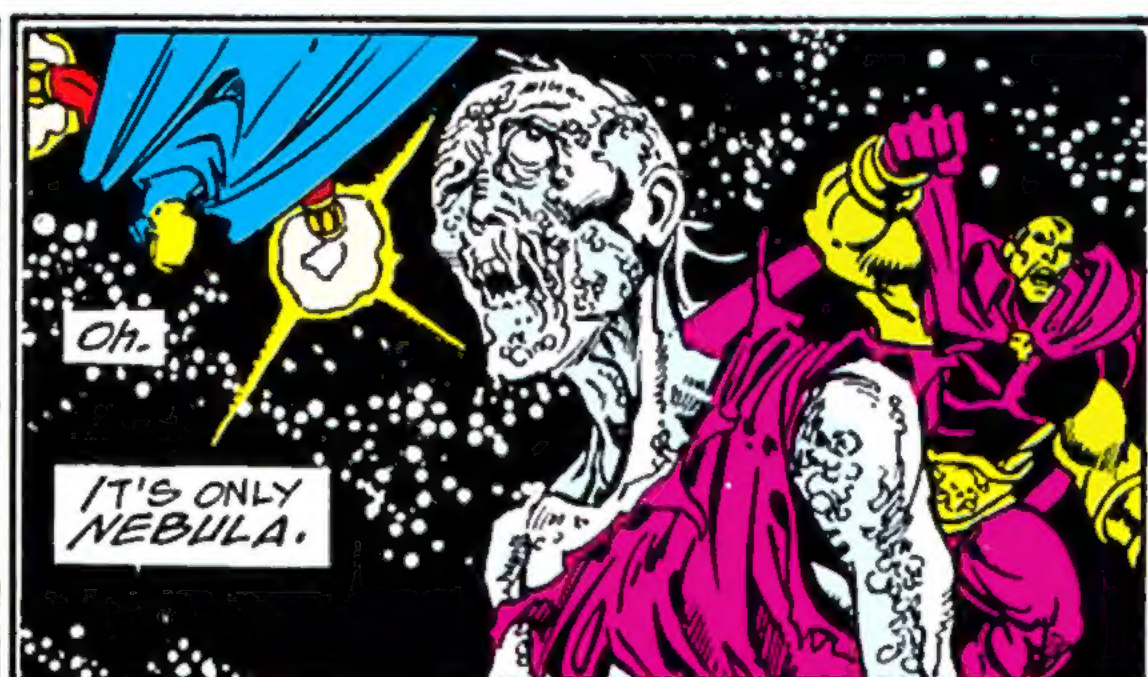
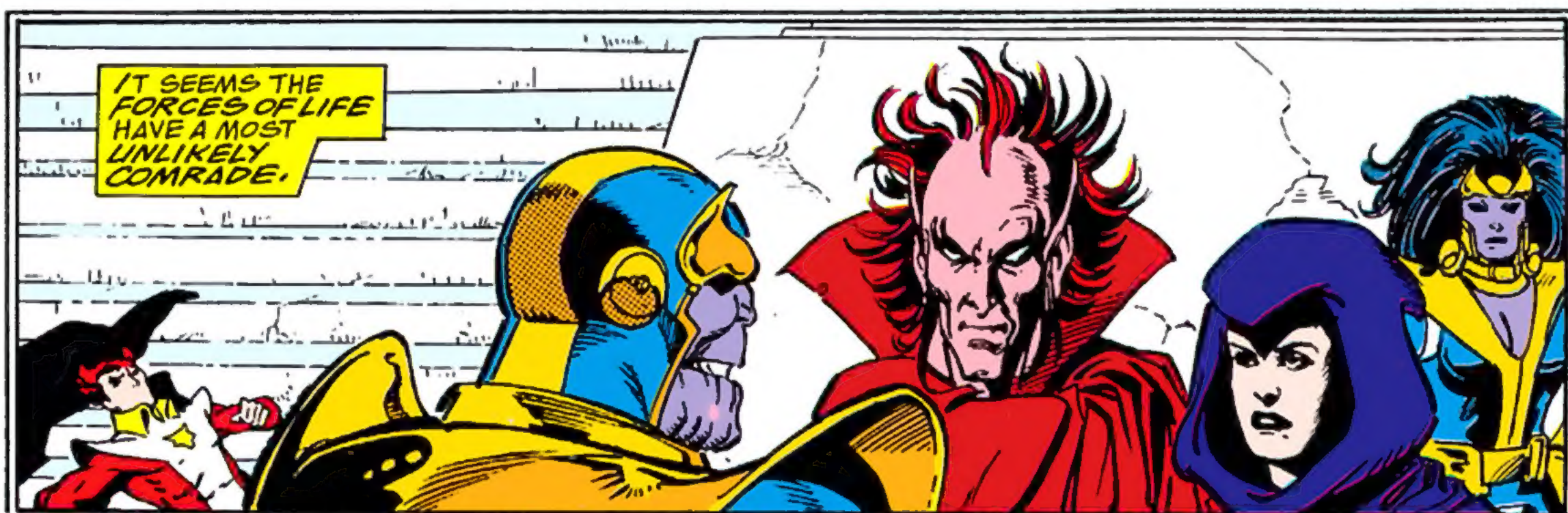


IT WAS MOST SUBTLY DONE, BUT THAT DEVIL JUST SAVED THE LIVES OF EARTH'S HEROES!

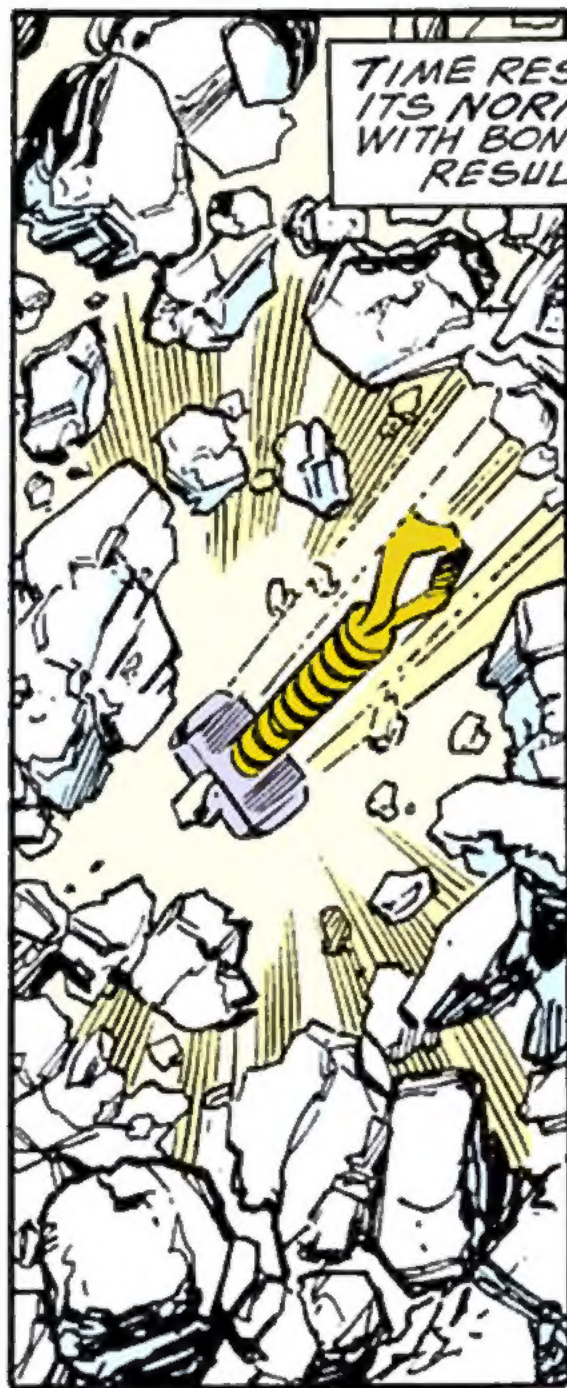
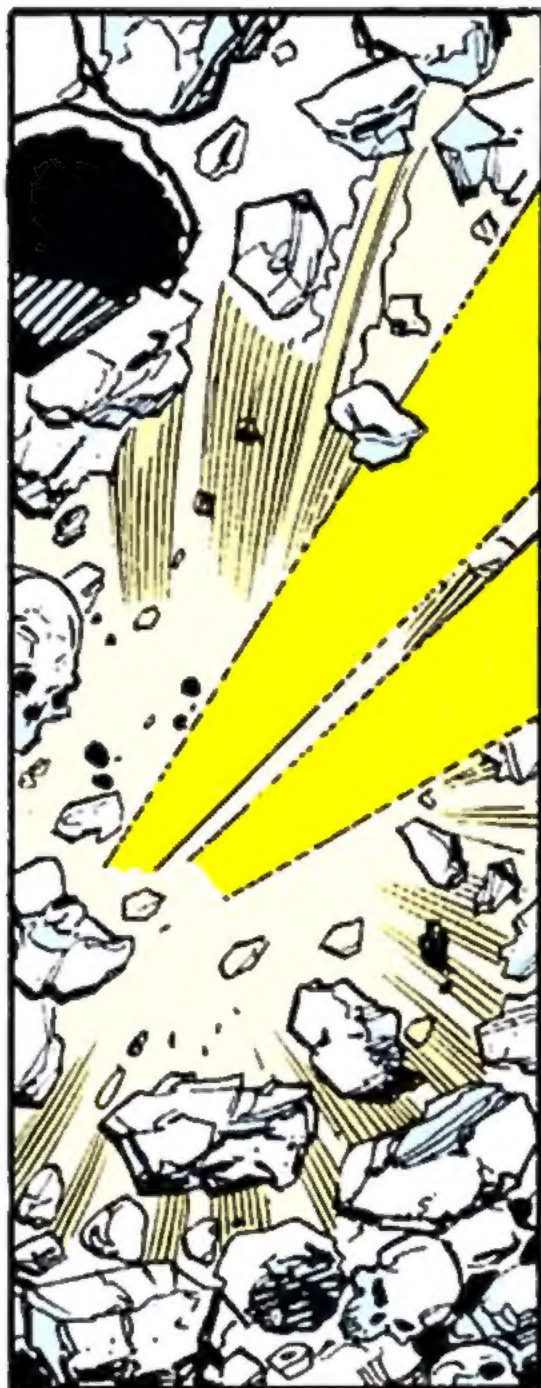
AND ENGINEERED THE POSSIBILITY OF THANOS'S DEFEAT!

THE MASTER OF DECEIT IS PLAYING UPON THE CONFUSION THANOS IS EXPERIENCING ADJUSTING TO HIS NEWLY ELEVATED STATE OF BEING.

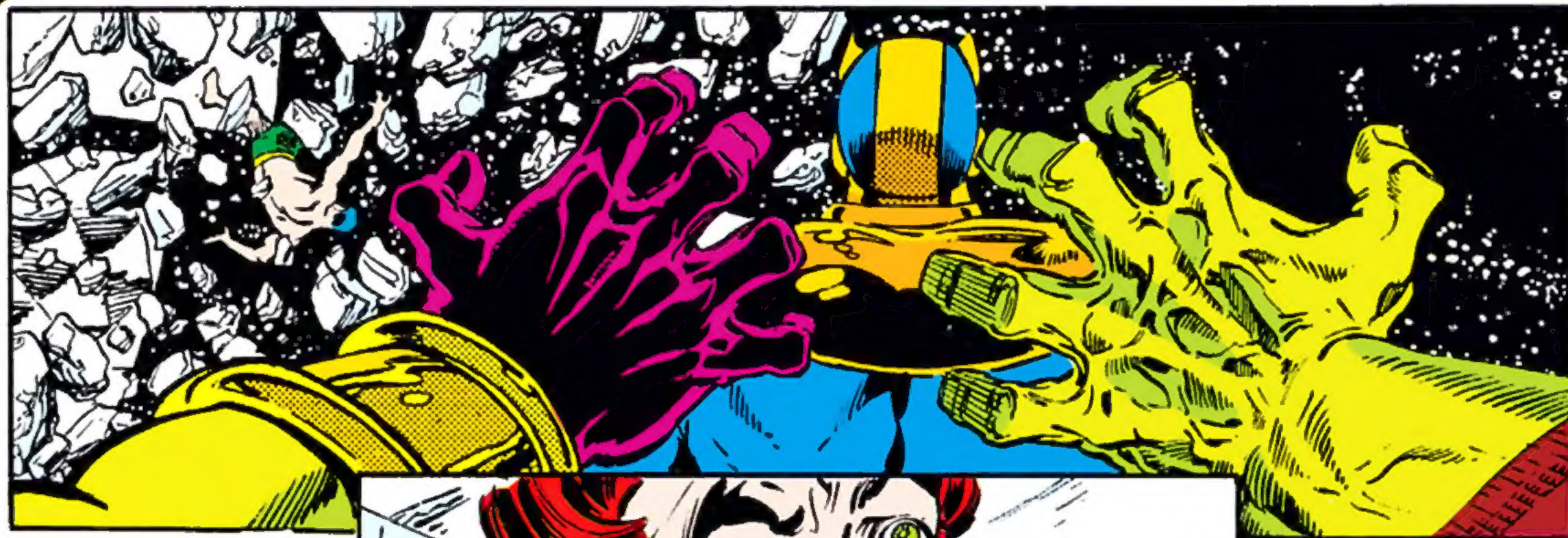
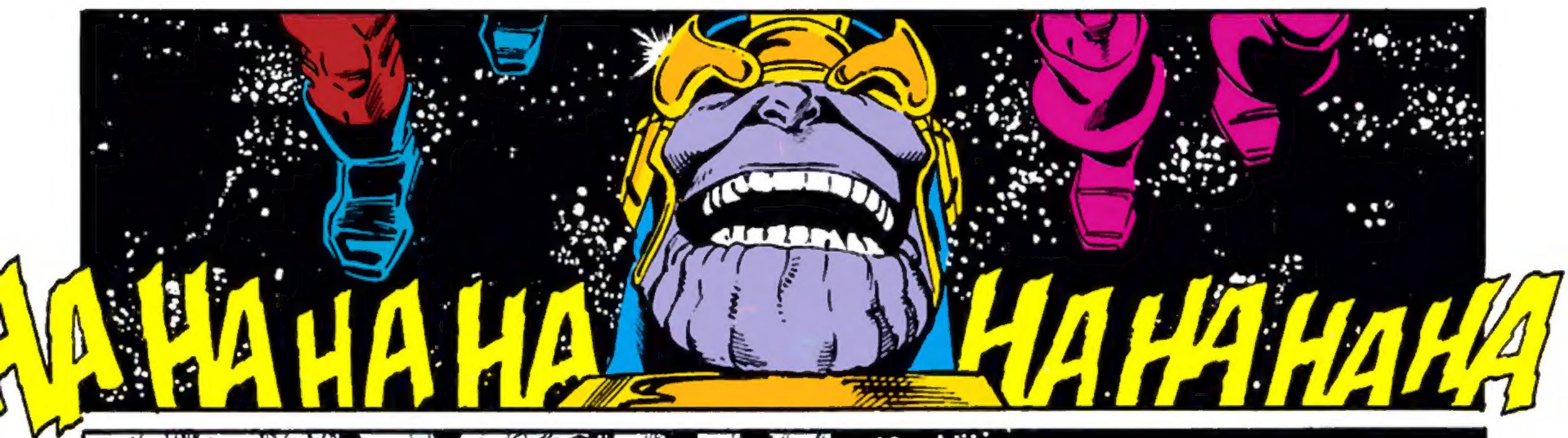
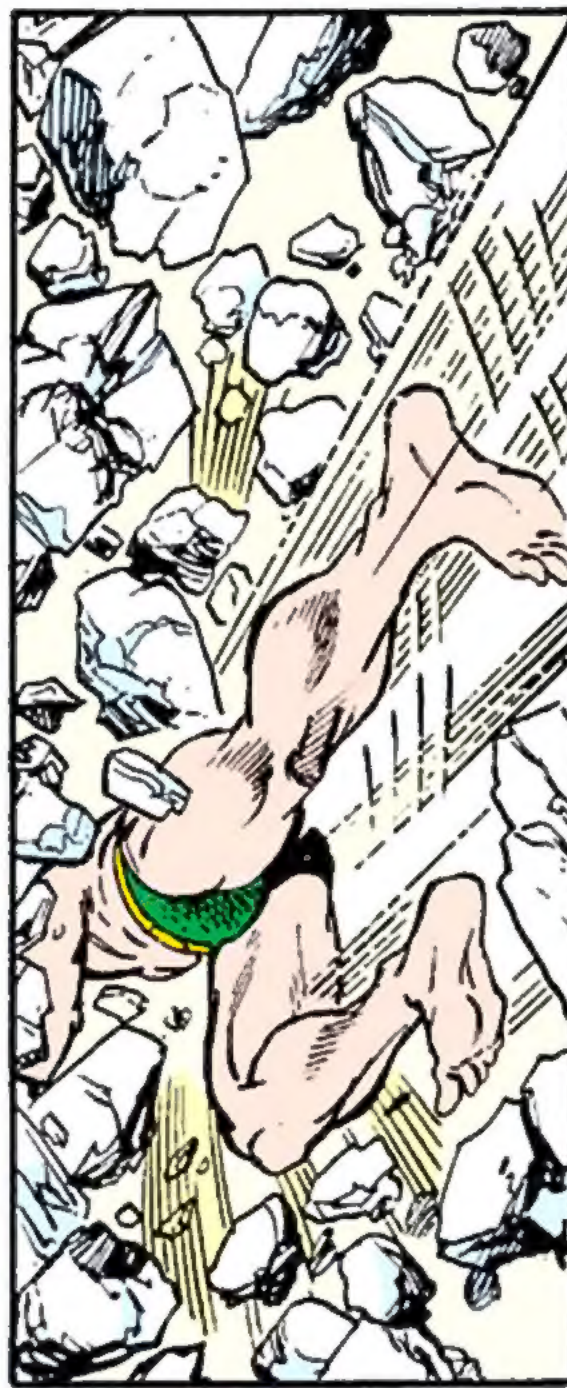
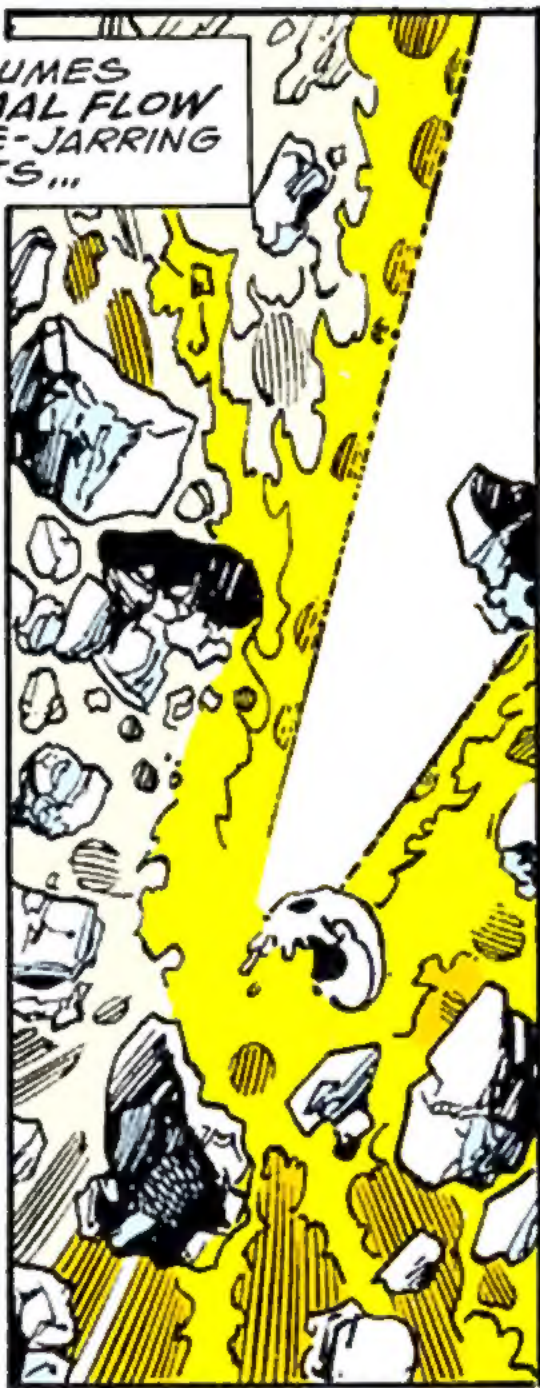








TIME RESUMES  
ITS NORMAL FLOW  
WITH BONE-JARRING  
RESULTS...



THEN...



"THE  
UNBELIEVABLE  
OCCURS!"



DRAX THE DESTROYER  
AND THE MONSTROUS HULK  
TAKE THANOS BY  
SURPRISE...!

HE TRULY HAS  
DAMPENED  
HIS COSMIC  
SENSES!

THANOS IS ACTUALLY  
PLAYING BY THE RULES!  
HOW OUT OF CHARACTER.

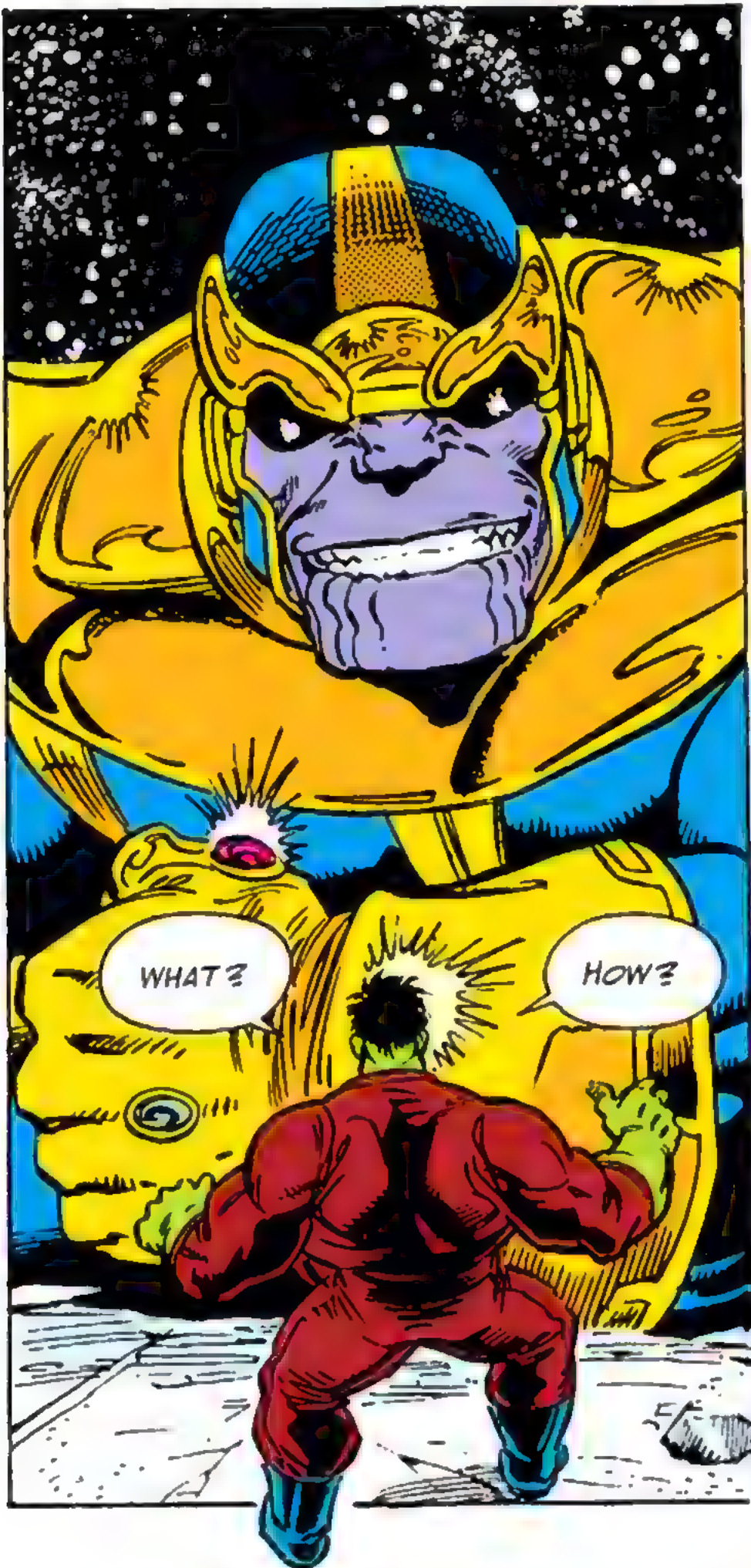
LOVE AND GOD-  
HOOD TRULY HAVE  
BEFUZZLED HIS  
REASON.

YET, DO EVEN THESE  
MIGHTY WARRIORS  
STAND A CHANCE  
AGAINST THANOS'  
VAST POWERS?

I DOUBT IT.

THEY ARE BUT  
BOTHERSOME  
FLEAS TO  
THANOS.





THOUGH THEIR CAUSE IS HOPELESS, I MUST HAND IT TO EARTH'S DEFENDERS...

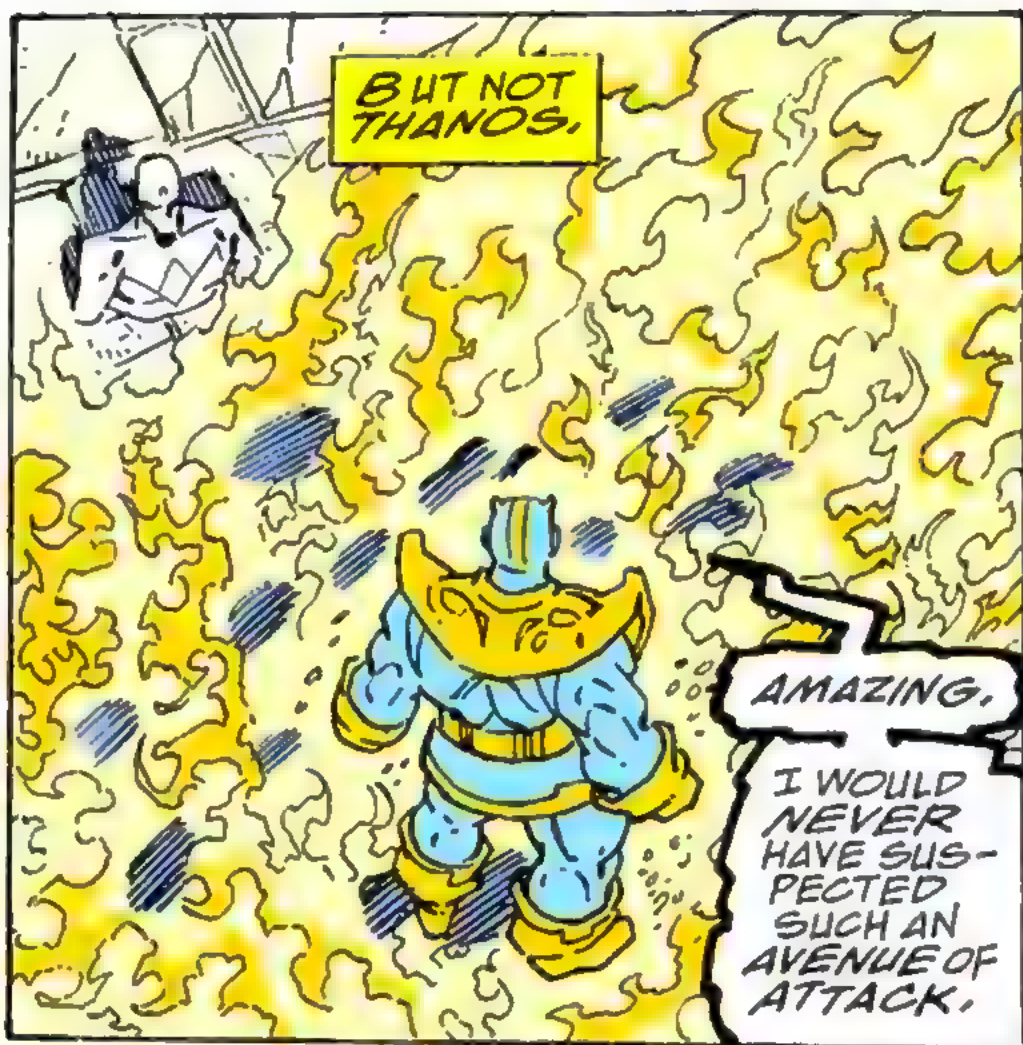


"THEIR BATTLE STRATEGY IS FIRST RATE AND FLAWLESSLY EXECUTED..."

A LESSER FOE WOULD SURELY FALL BEFORE THEIR ASSAULT!



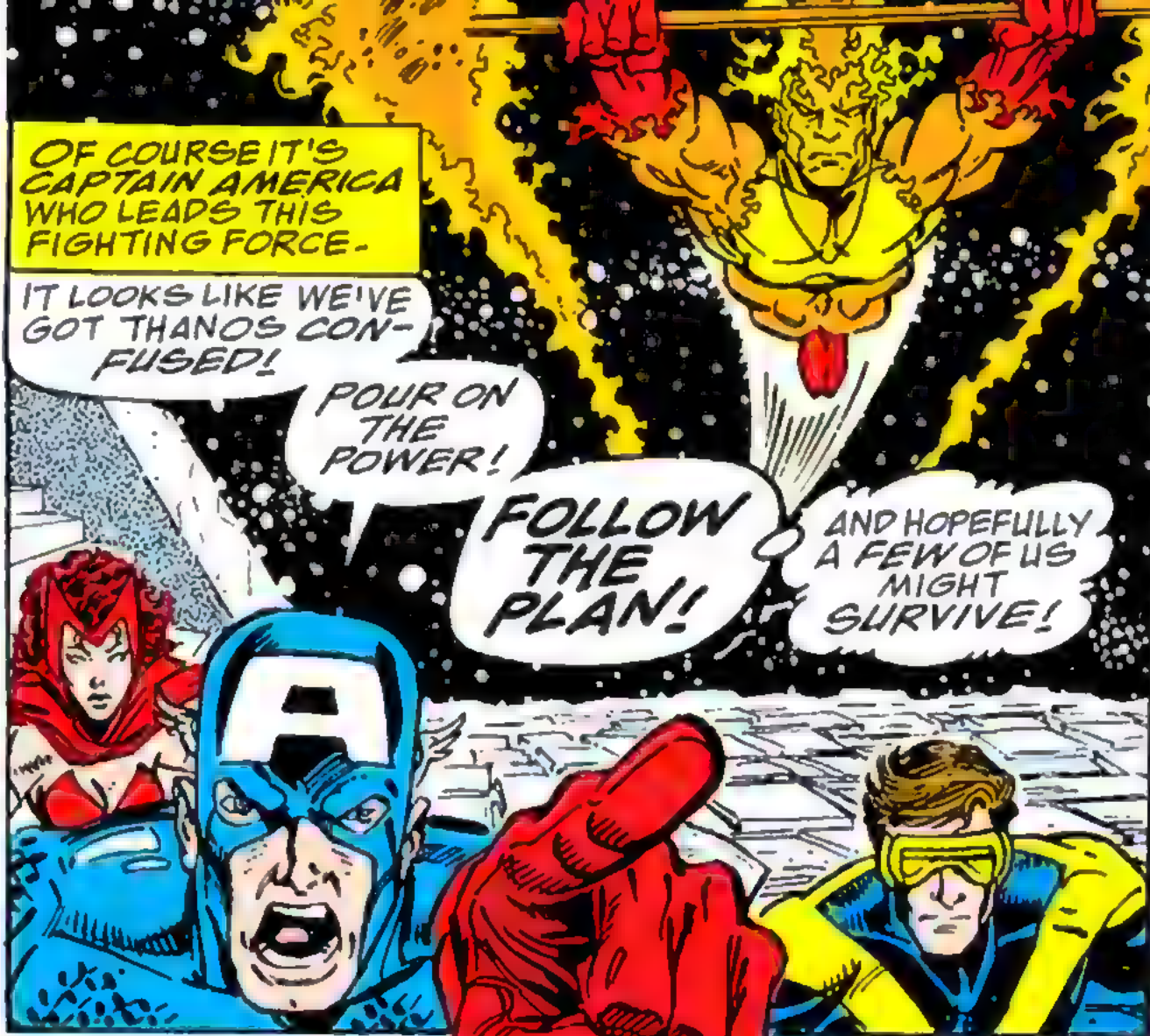




BUT NOT THANOS.

AMAZING.

I WOULD NEVER HAVE SUSPECTED SUCH AN AVENUE OF ATTACK.



OF COURSE IT'S CAPTAIN AMERICA WHO LEADS THIS FIGHTING FORCE.

IT LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT THANOS CONFUSED!

POUR ON THE POWER!

FOLLOW THE PLAN!

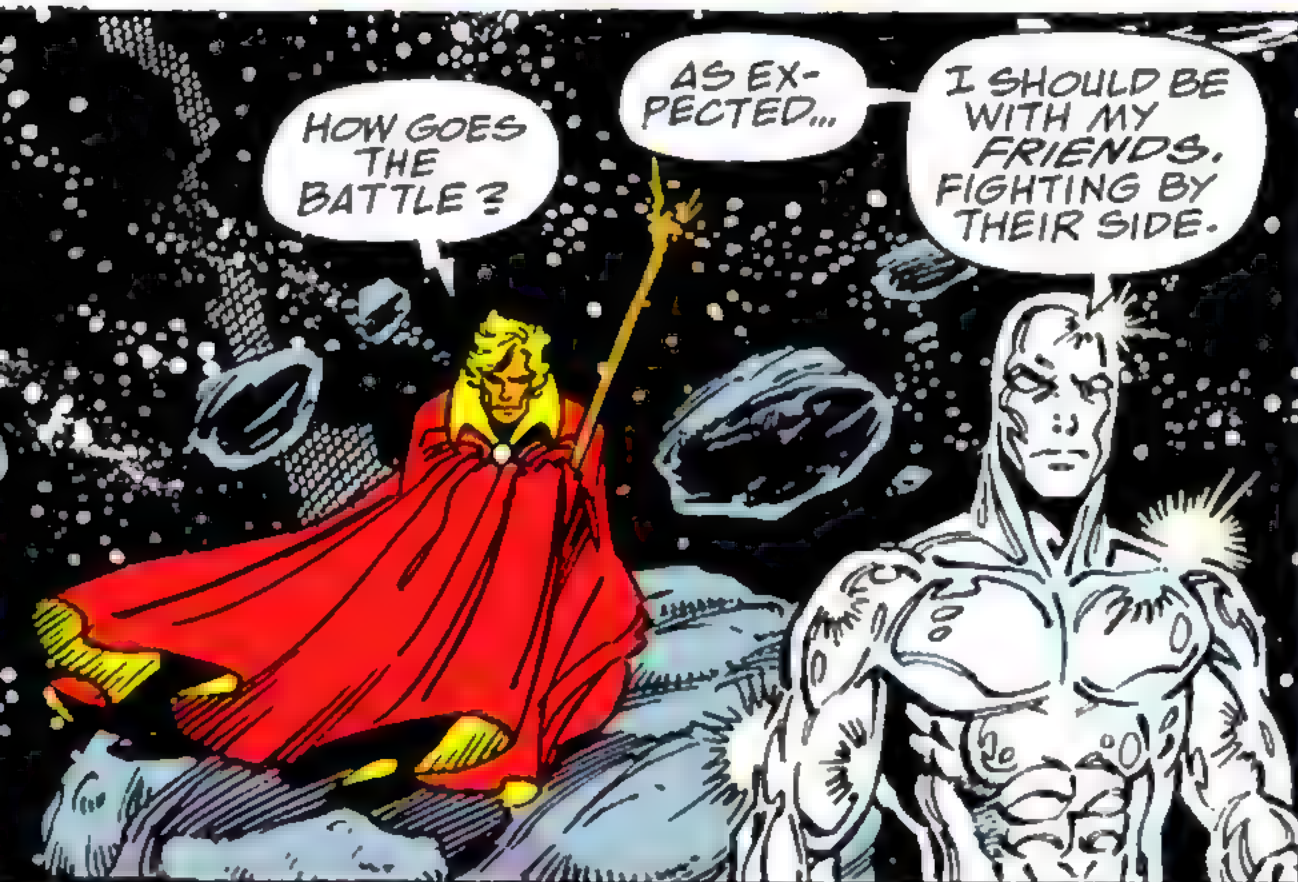
AND HOPEFULLY A FEW OF US MIGHT SURVIVE!



VAIN HOPES...

I CAN ALREADY SENSE THANOS ADJUSTING TO HIS SITUATION, TAKING CONTROL OF THE BATTLE.

THE SHE-HULK AND NAMOR MUST BE MERCILESS IF THEY HOPE TO PREVAIL.



HOW GOES THE BATTLE?

AS EXPECTED...

I SHOULD BE WITH MY FRIENDS, FIGHTING BY THEIR SIDE.



THAT WOULD BE LITTER FOLLY.

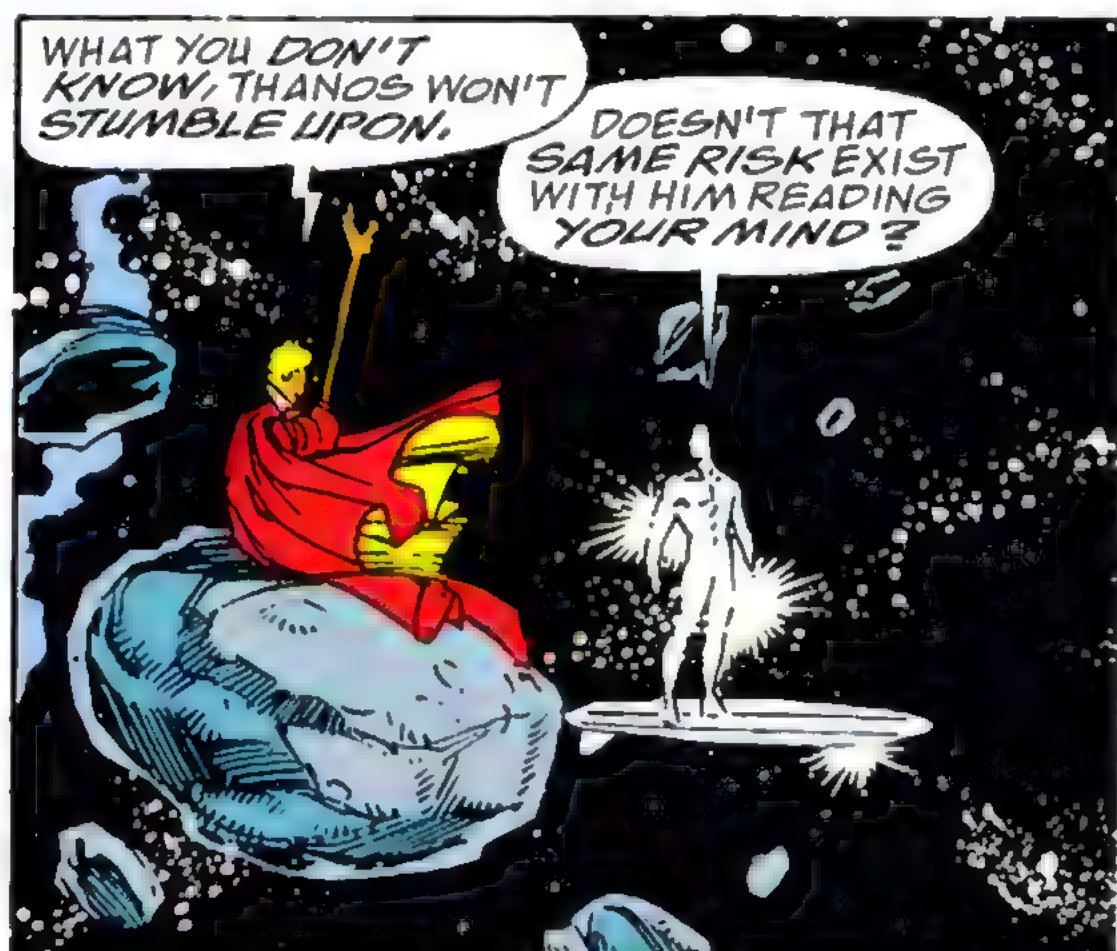
AND WHY IS THAT?



BECAUSE YOU HAVE A MAJOR ROLE TO PLAY IN THIS LITTLE GAME.

WHICH IS?

ALL IN DUE TIME, SURFER!!!



WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW, THANOS WON'T STUMBLE UPON.

DOESN'T THAT SAME RISK EXIST WITH HIM READING YOUR MIND?





NO.

THANOS  
KNOWS  
ME.

HE'LL NOT RISK  
SUCH A DISTRACTION  
WHILE IN THE MIDST  
OF BATTLE.

"THANOS HAS NARROWED  
THE SCOPE OF HIS GODHOOD  
JUST AS HE WAS BEGINNING  
TO ADJUST TO IT-

"HIS MIND MUST  
BE REELING  
FROM THE  
CHANGES.

"OF COURSE  
THAT MAKES  
HIM NO LESS  
DANGEROUS."



AWAY FROM  
ME YOU  
CLOWNS!

NAMOR--THERE'S  
SOMETHING GROWING  
WHERE THANOS  
TOUCHED US!!

REMOVE IT,  
QUICKLY!



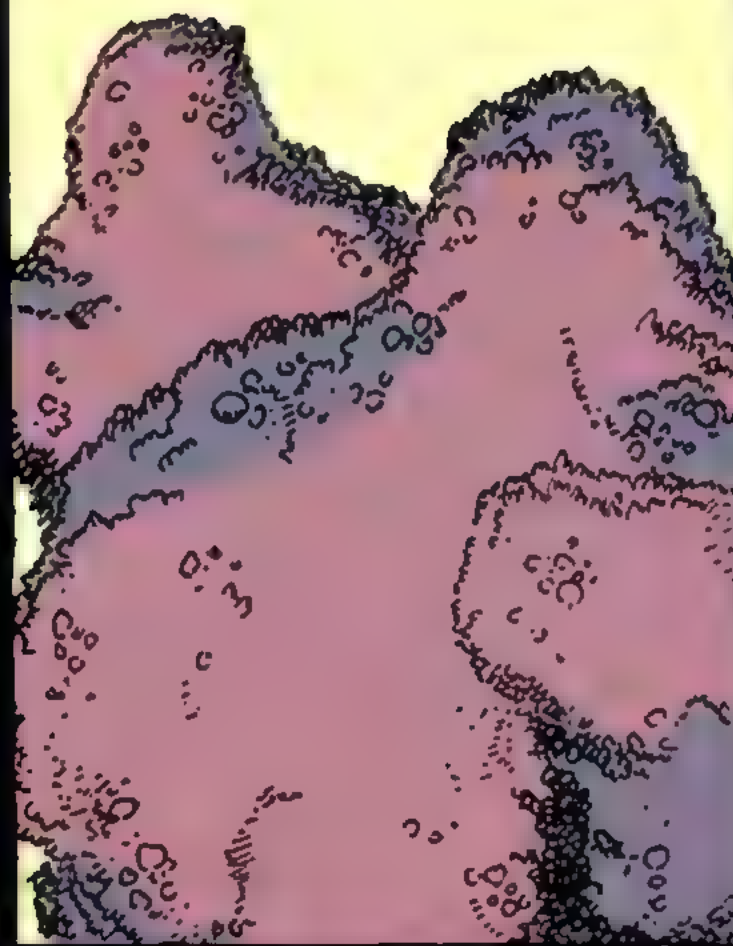
SORRY, NAMOR, MY  
BROTHER WOULD  
NEVER LAY A TRAP  
SO EASILY  
EVADED.



TO YOUR SORROW,  
THERE ARE TRUTHS  
THAT CANNOT BE  
DENIED.



HE IS THANOS  
AND HIS NAME MEANS  
DEATH.





THE OLD CAMPAIGNER IN  
THANOS BEGINS TO RETURN...

THIS TYPE OF BATTLE  
HAS ALWAYS BEEN  
HIS FORTE.

ANY HOPE I FOOLISHLY HELD OF  
EARTH'S HEROES TRIUMPHING  
QUICKLY FADES.

YET HOPE  
NEVER  
DIES...

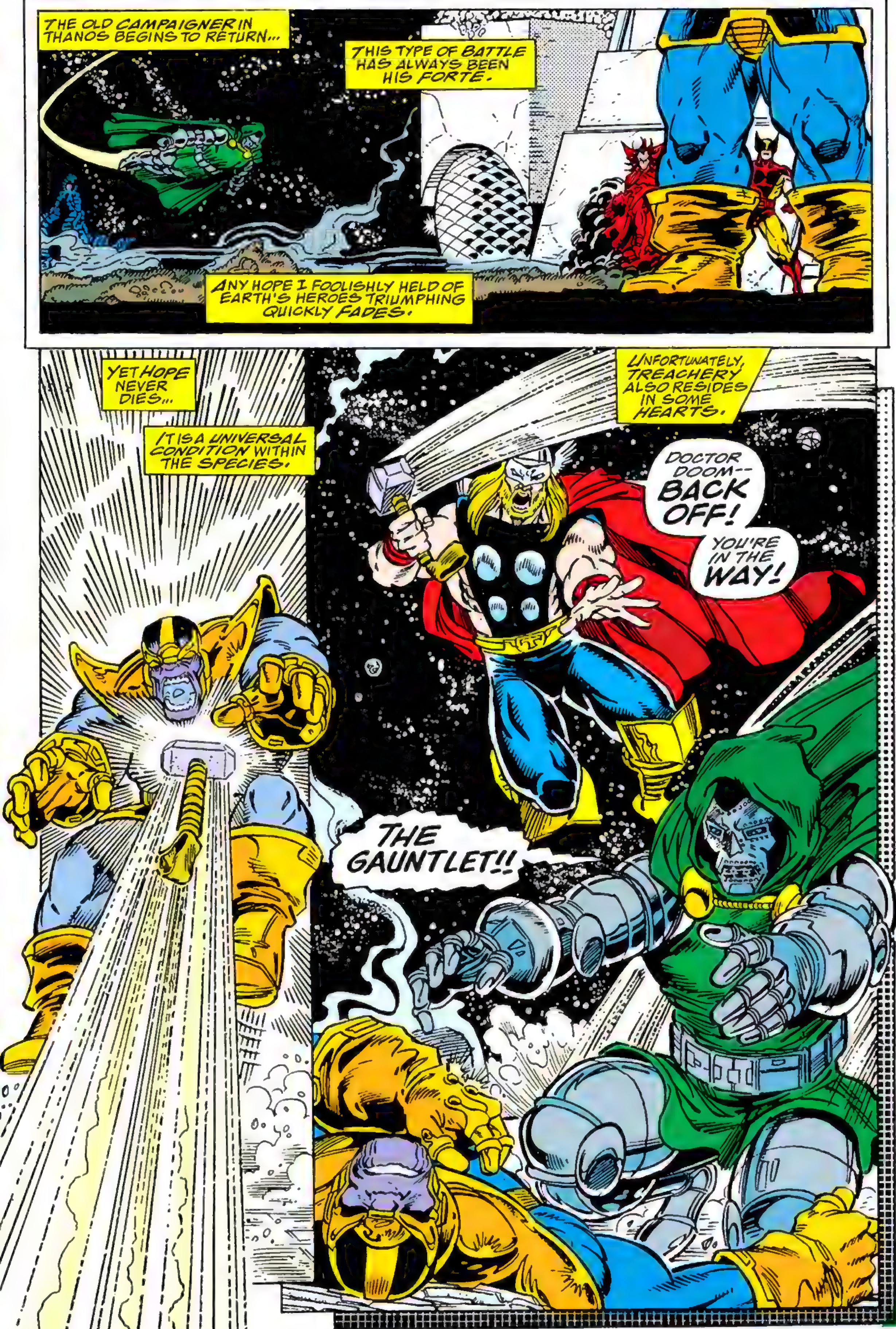
IT IS A UNIVERSAL  
CONDITION WITHIN  
THE SPECIES.

UNFORTUNATELY,  
TREACHERY  
ALSO RESIDES  
IN SOME  
HEARTS.

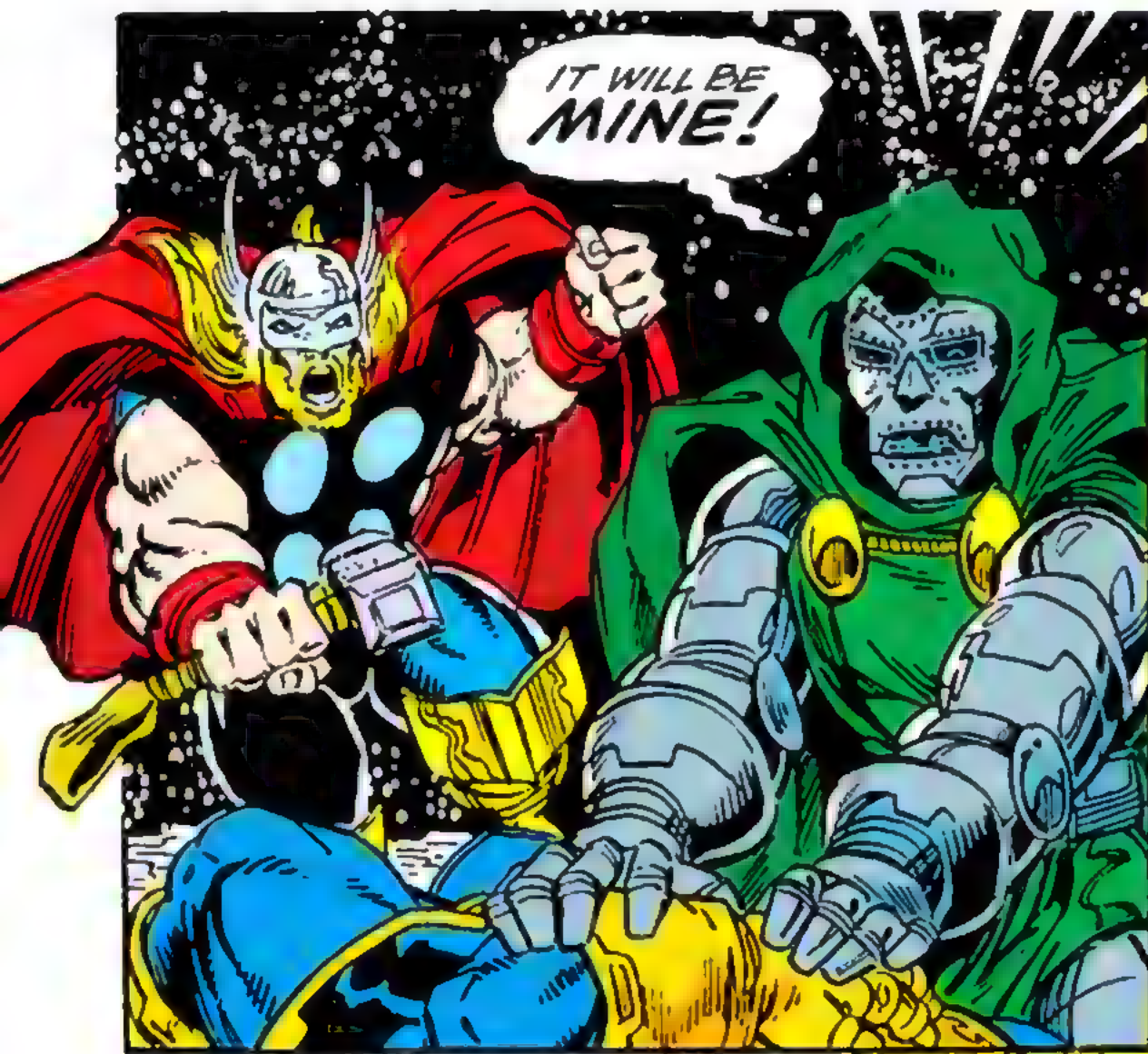
DOCTOR  
DOOM--  
BACK  
OFF!

YOU'RE  
IN THE  
WAY!

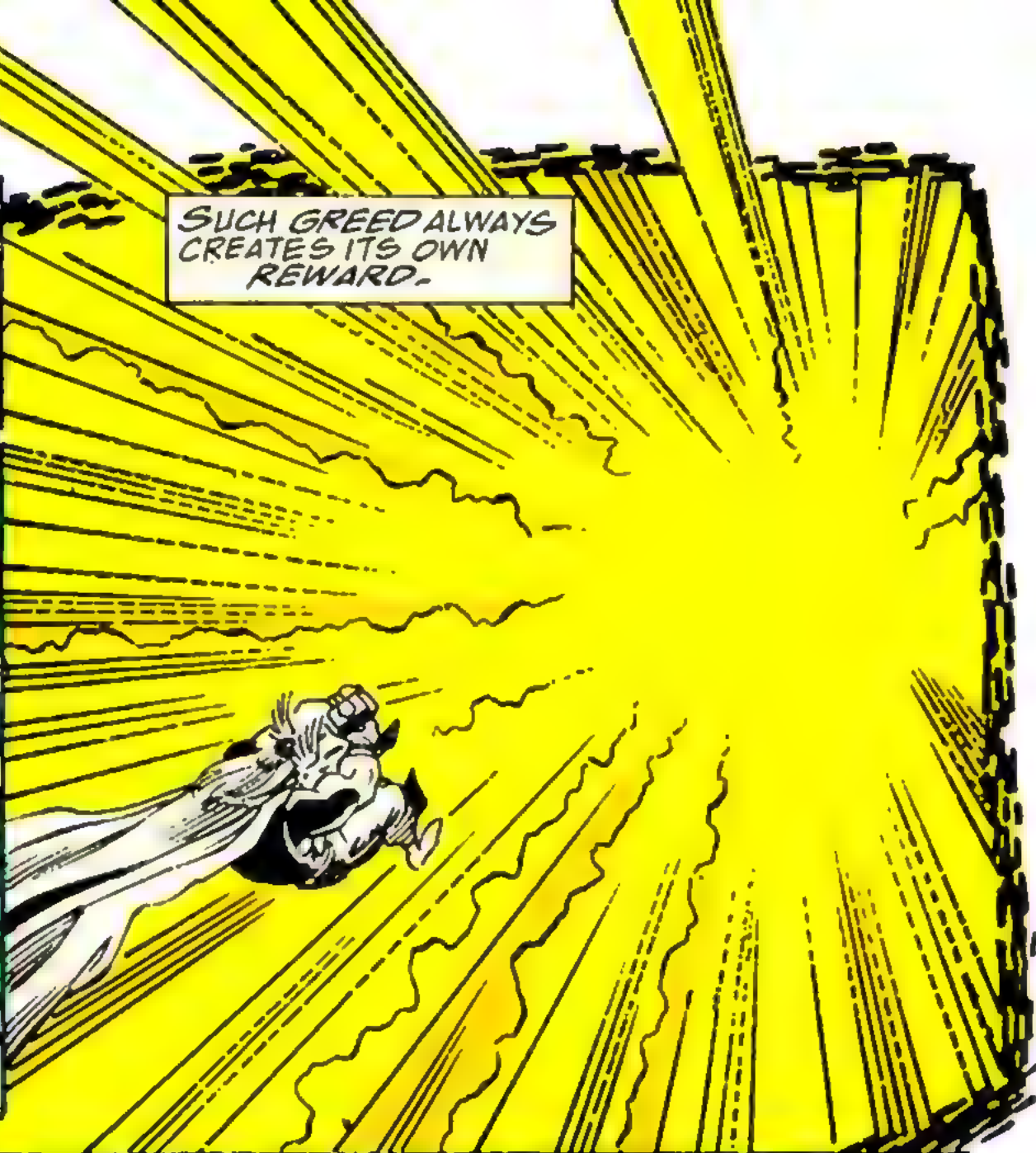
THE  
GAUNTLET!!



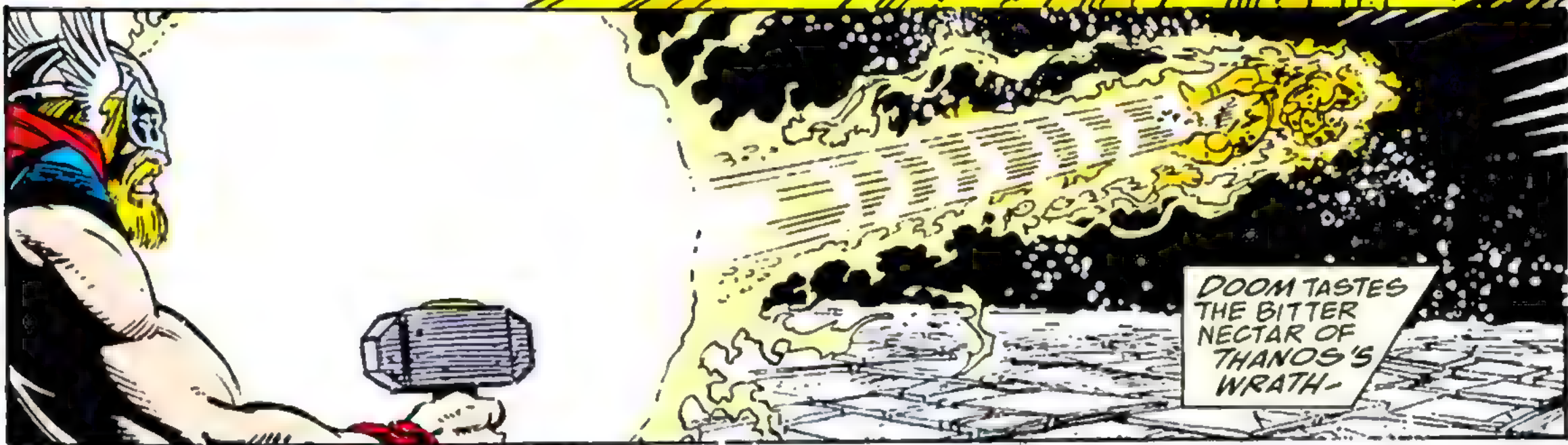




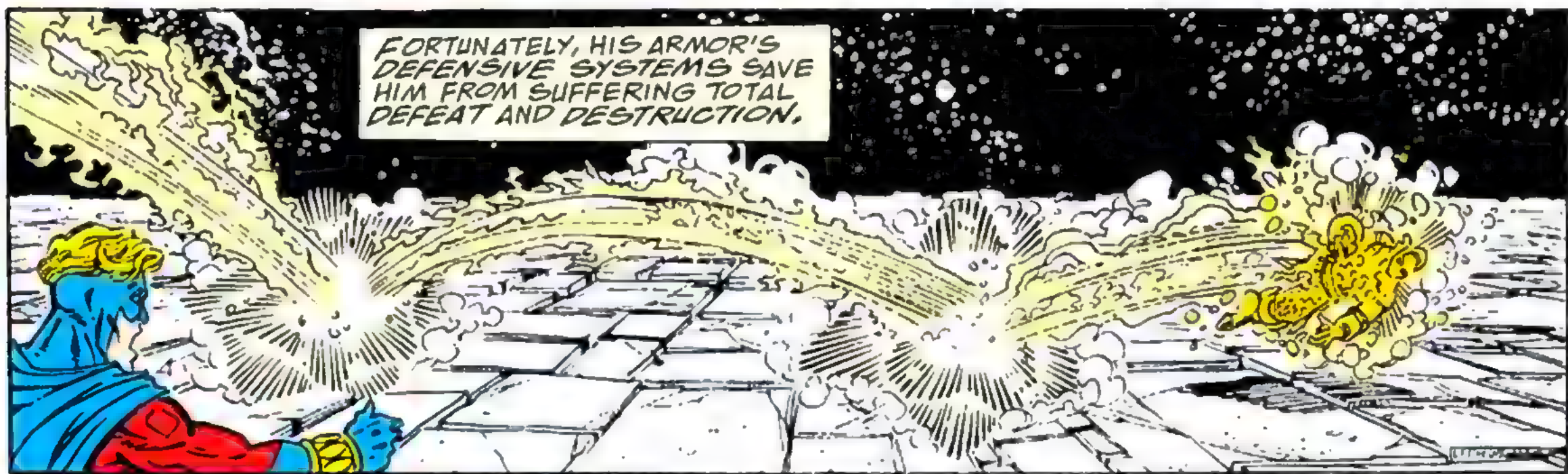
IT WILL BE  
**MINE!**



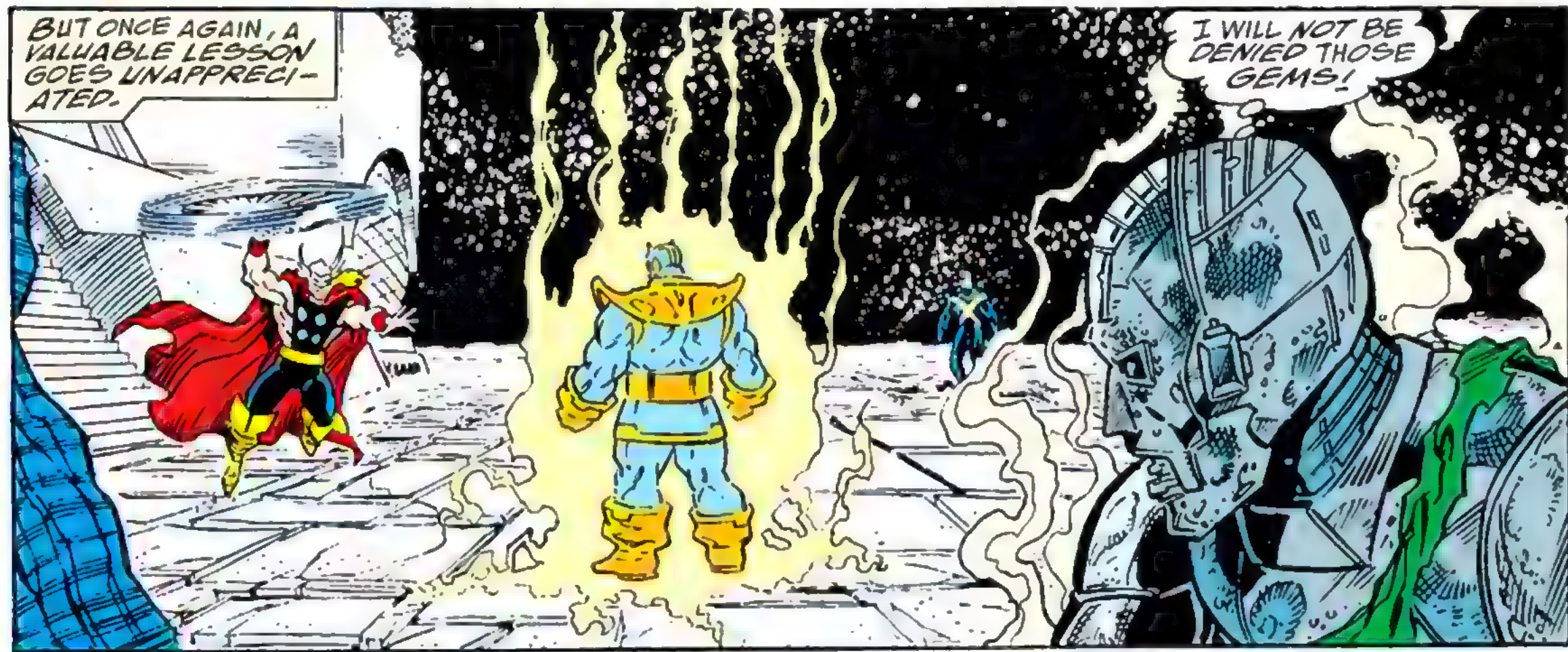
SUCH GREED ALWAYS  
CREATES ITS OWN  
REWARD.



DOOM TASTES  
THE BITTER  
NECTAR OF  
THANOS'S  
WRATH.



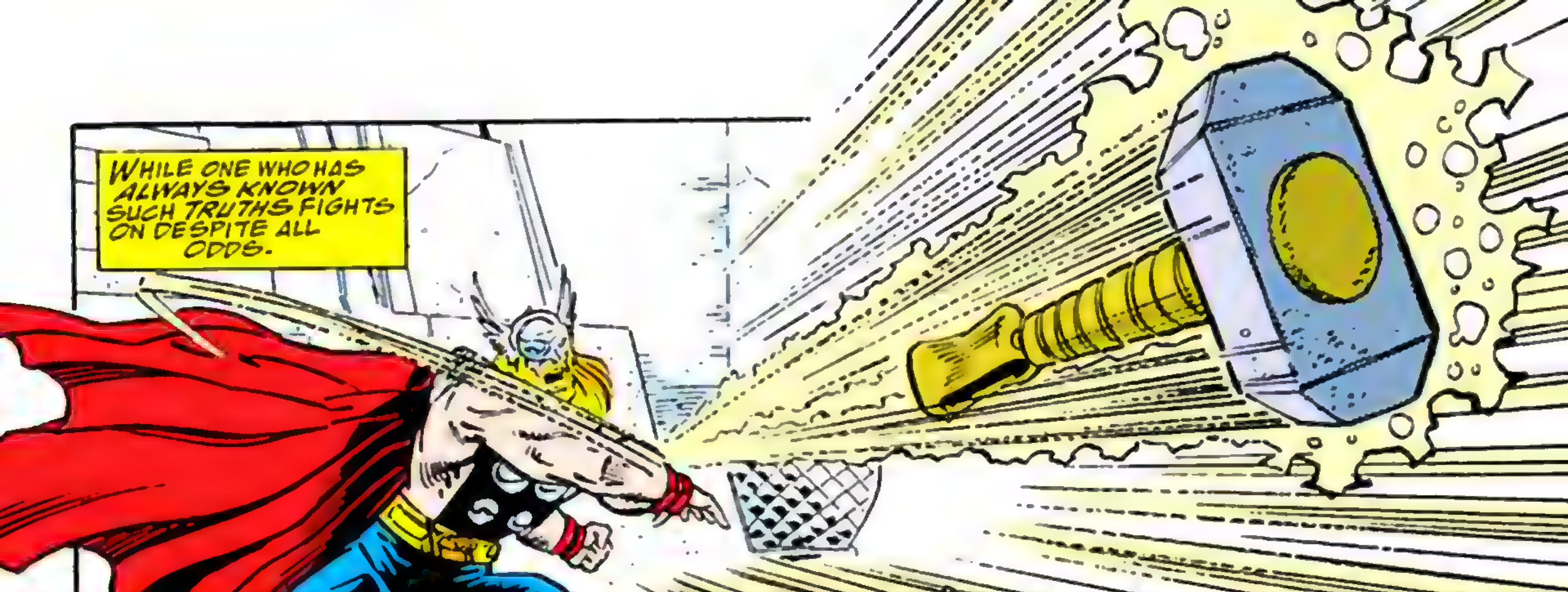
FORTUNATELY, HIS ARMOR'S  
DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS SAVE  
HIM FROM SUFFERING TOTAL  
DEFEAT AND DESTRUCTION.



BUT ONCE AGAIN, A  
VALUABLE LESSON  
GOES UNAPPRECI-  
ATED.

I WILL NOT BE  
DENIED THOSE  
GEMS!





WHILE ONE WHO HAS ALWAYS KNOWN SUCH TRUTHS FIGHTS ON DESPITE ALL ODDS.

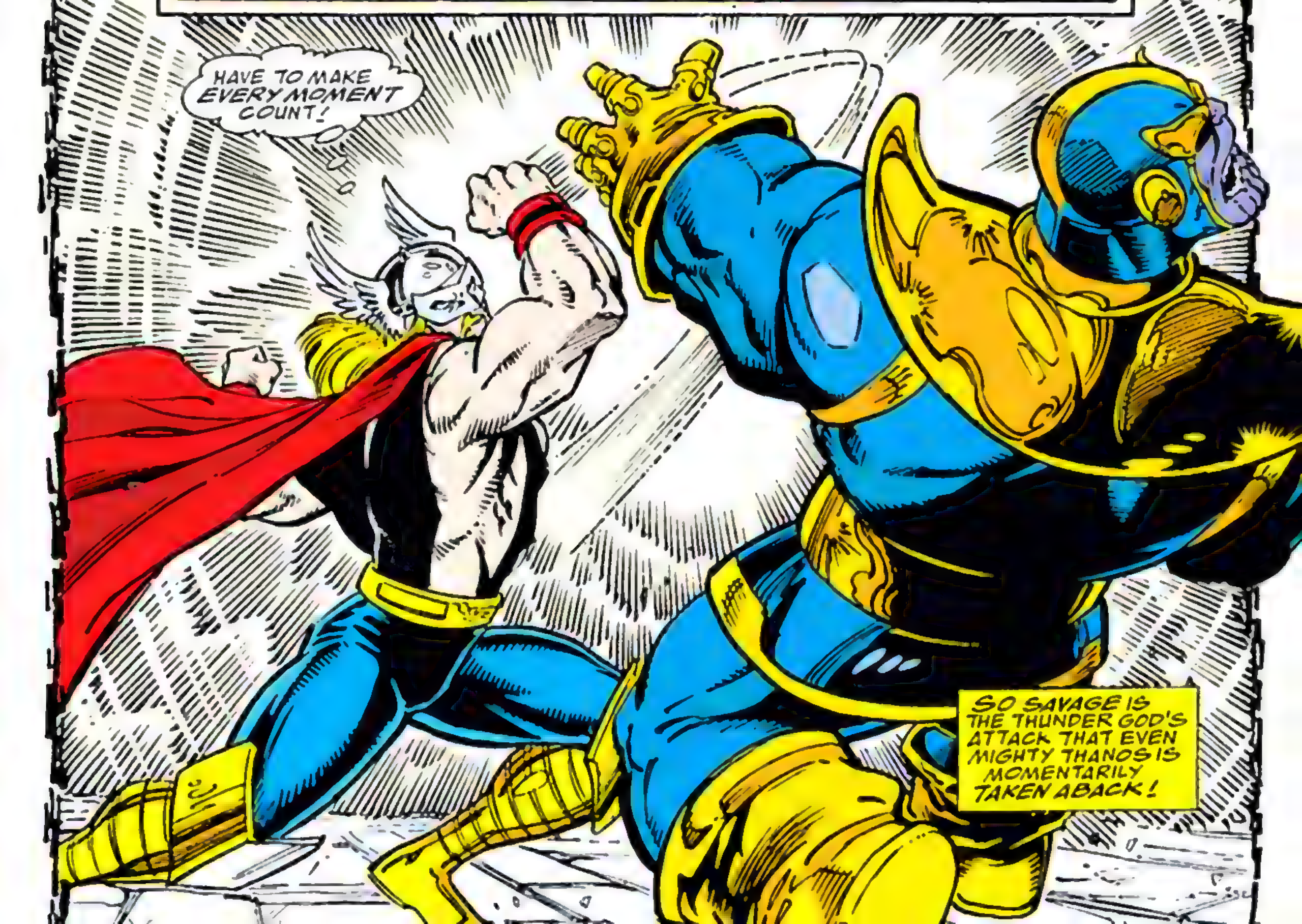


AND, IN TURN DISCOVERS NEW, MORE HORRIFYING REALITIES.

A TELEPORTATIONAL PORTAL CONJURED UP BY THE POWER SUPREME.



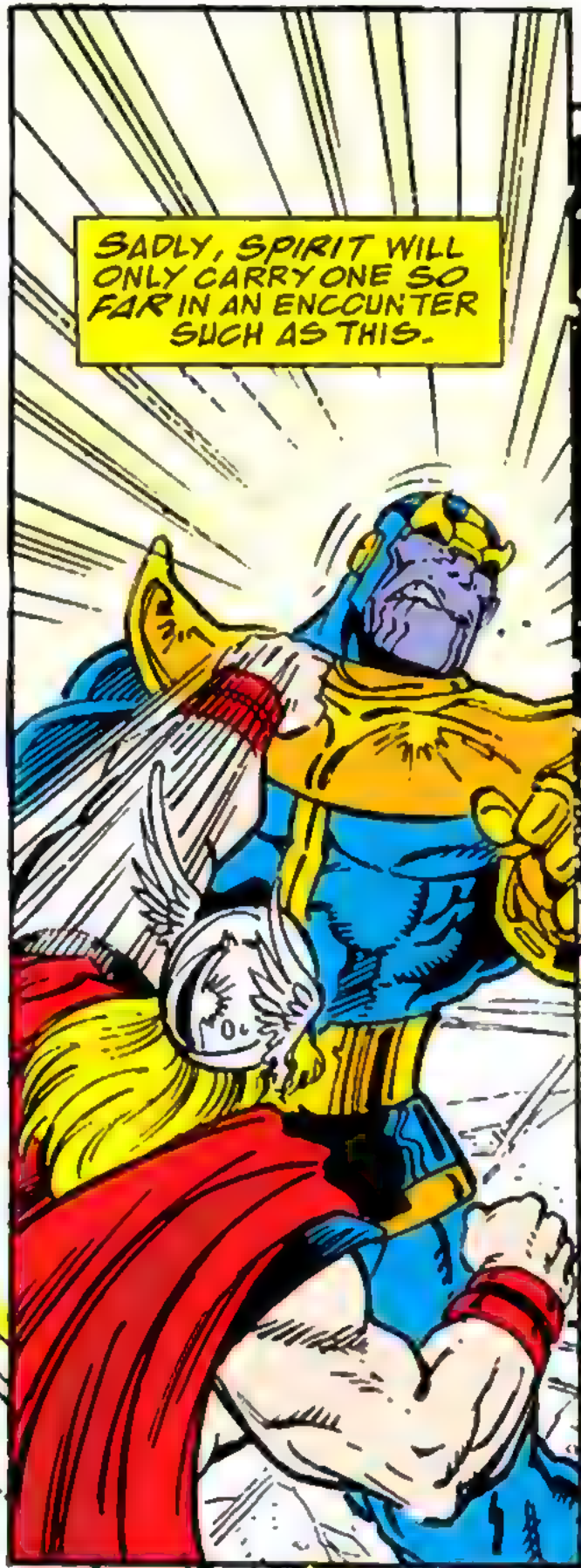
WITHOUT MY HAMMER, I'LL REVERT TO PLAIN OL' ERIC MASTERSON IN A MERE 60 SECONDS!



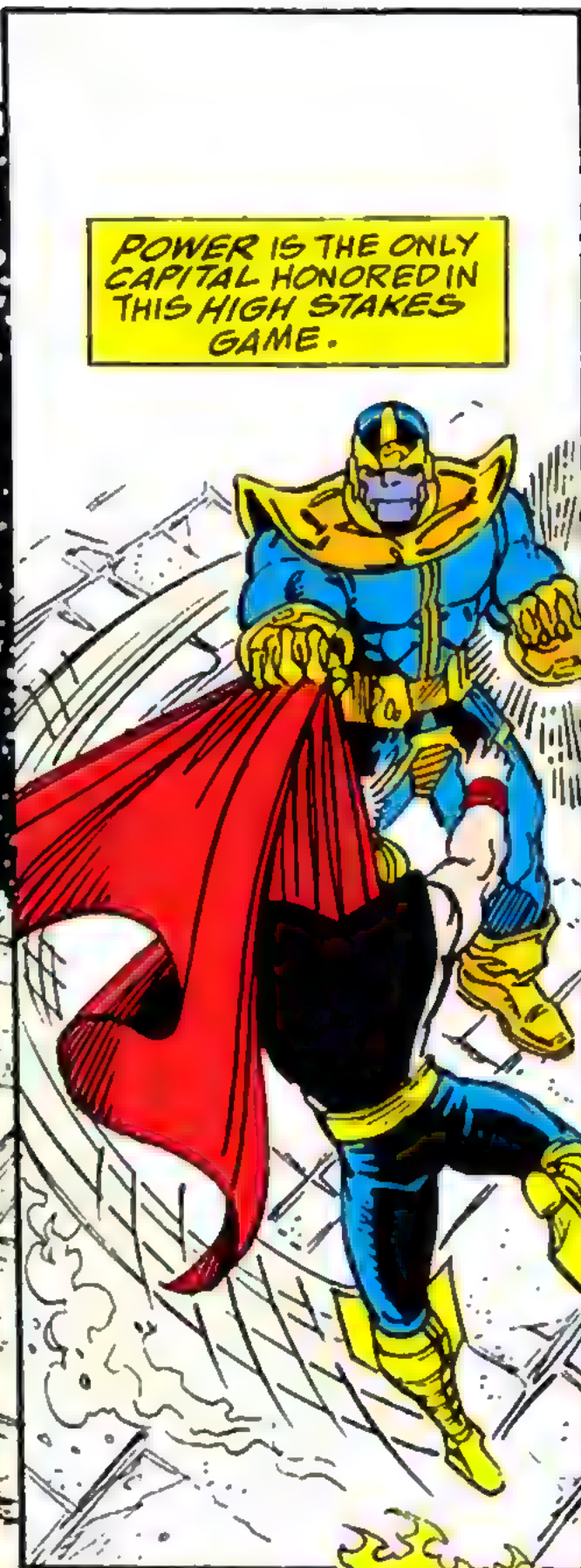
HAVE TO MAKE EVERY MOMENT COUNT!

SO SAVAGE IS THE THUNDER GOD'S ATTACK THAT EVEN MIGHTY THANOS IS MOMENTARILY TAKEN ABACK!

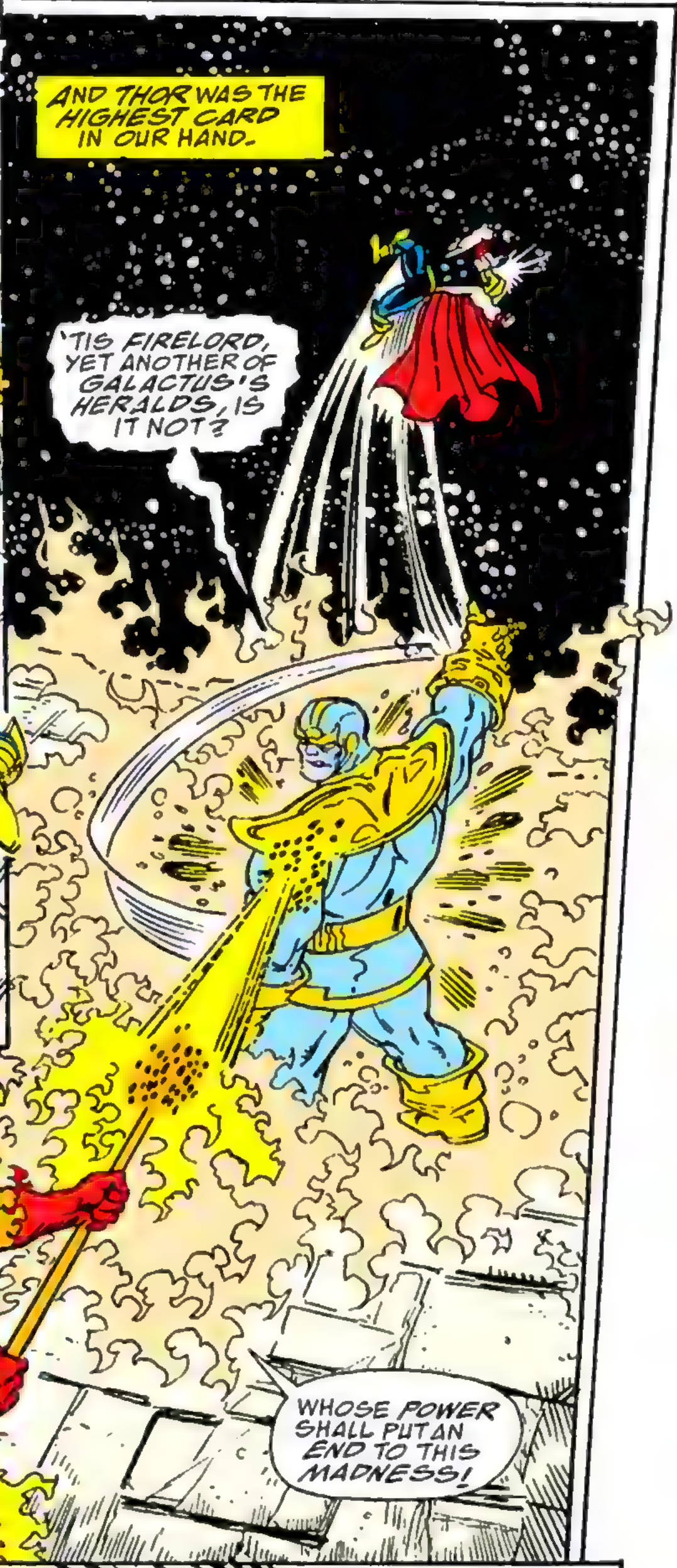




SADLY, SPIRIT WILL ONLY CARRY ONE SO FAR IN AN ENCOUNTER SUCH AS THIS.



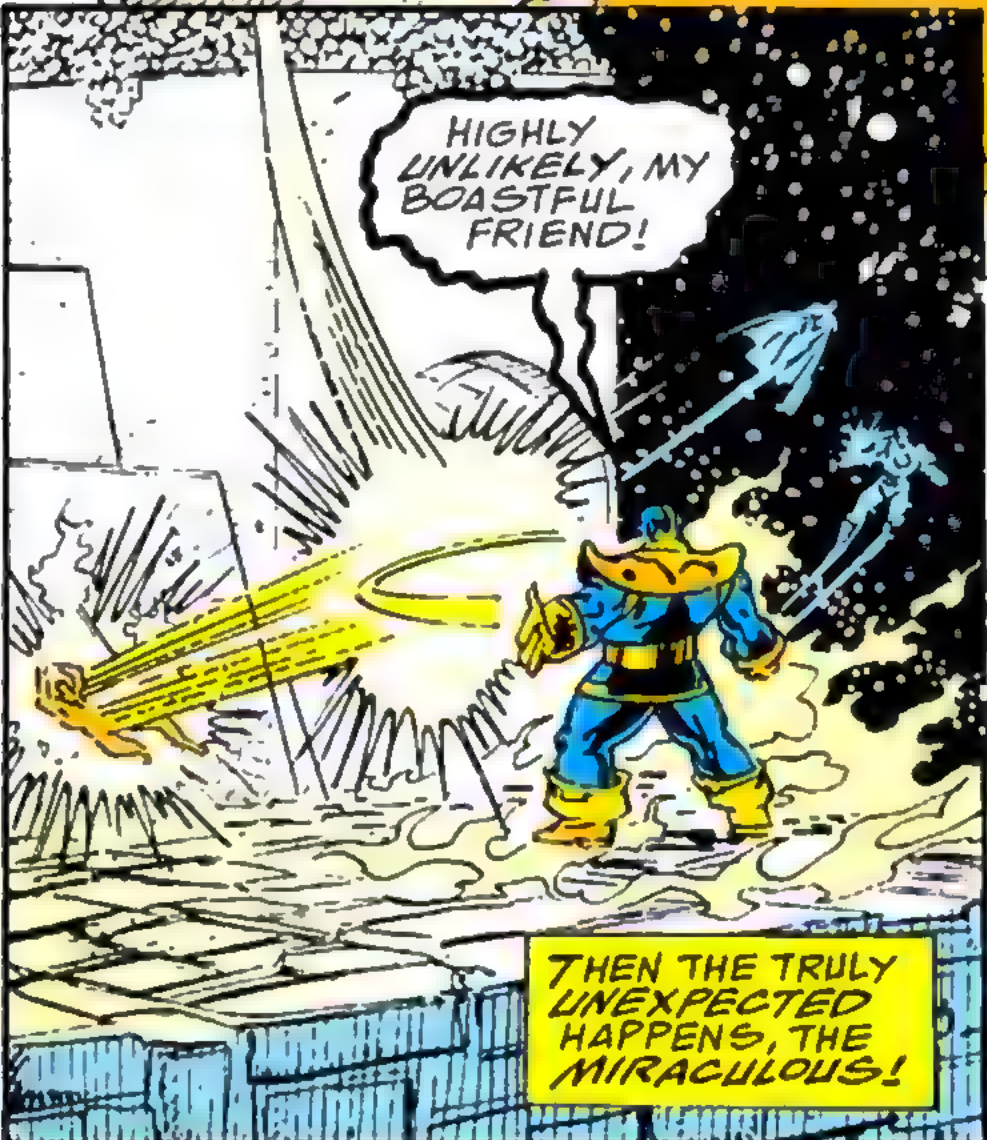
POWER IS THE ONLY CAPITAL HONORED IN THIS HIGH STAKES GAME.



AND THOR WAS THE HIGHEST CARD IN OUR HAND.

'TIS FIRELORD, YET ANOTHER OF GALACTUS'S HERALDS, IS IT NOT?

WHOSE POWER SHALL PUT AN END TO THIS MADNESS!



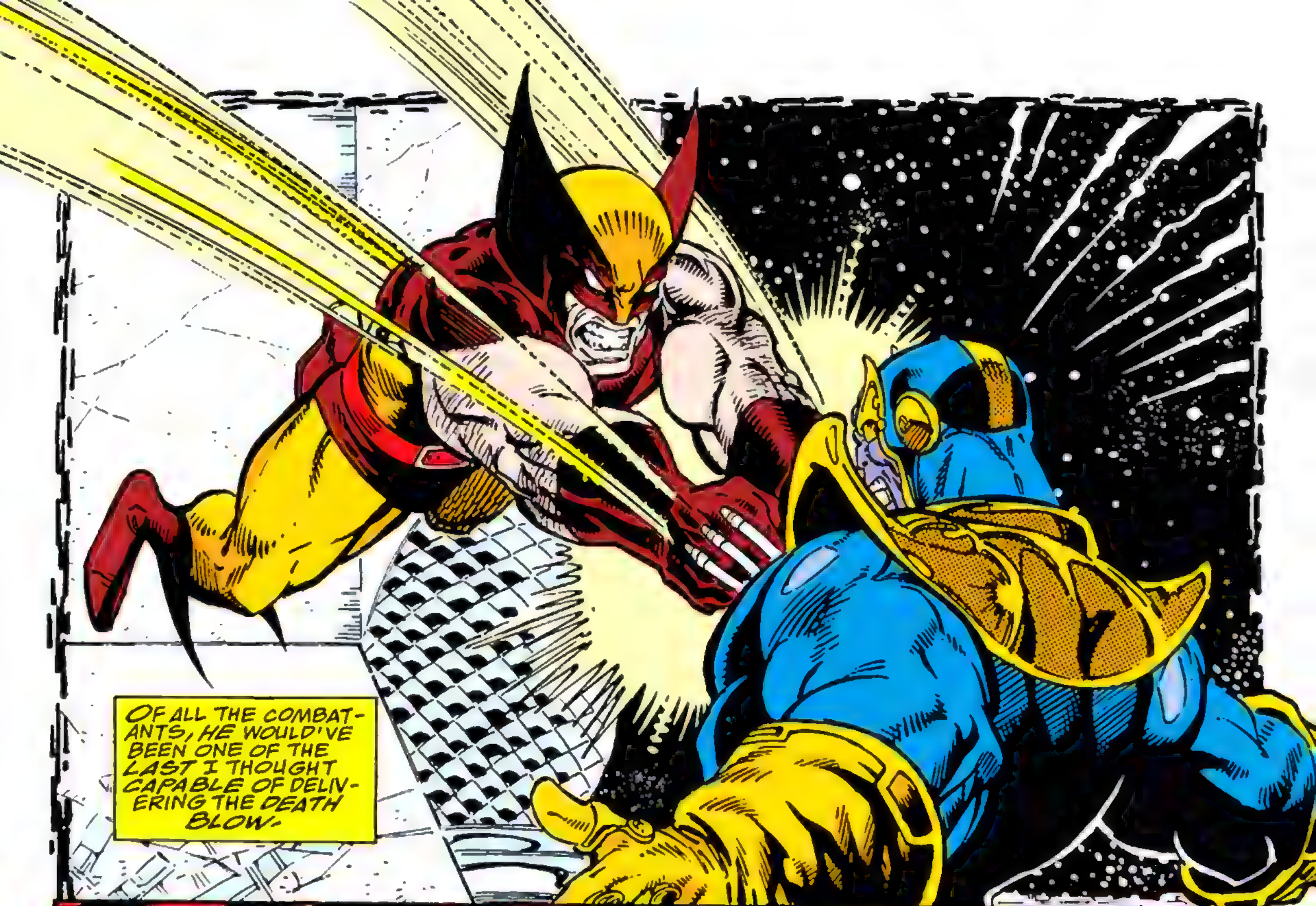
HIGHLY UNLIKELY, MY BOASTFUL FRIEND!

THEN THE TRULY UNEXPECTED HAPPENS, THE MIRACULOUS!

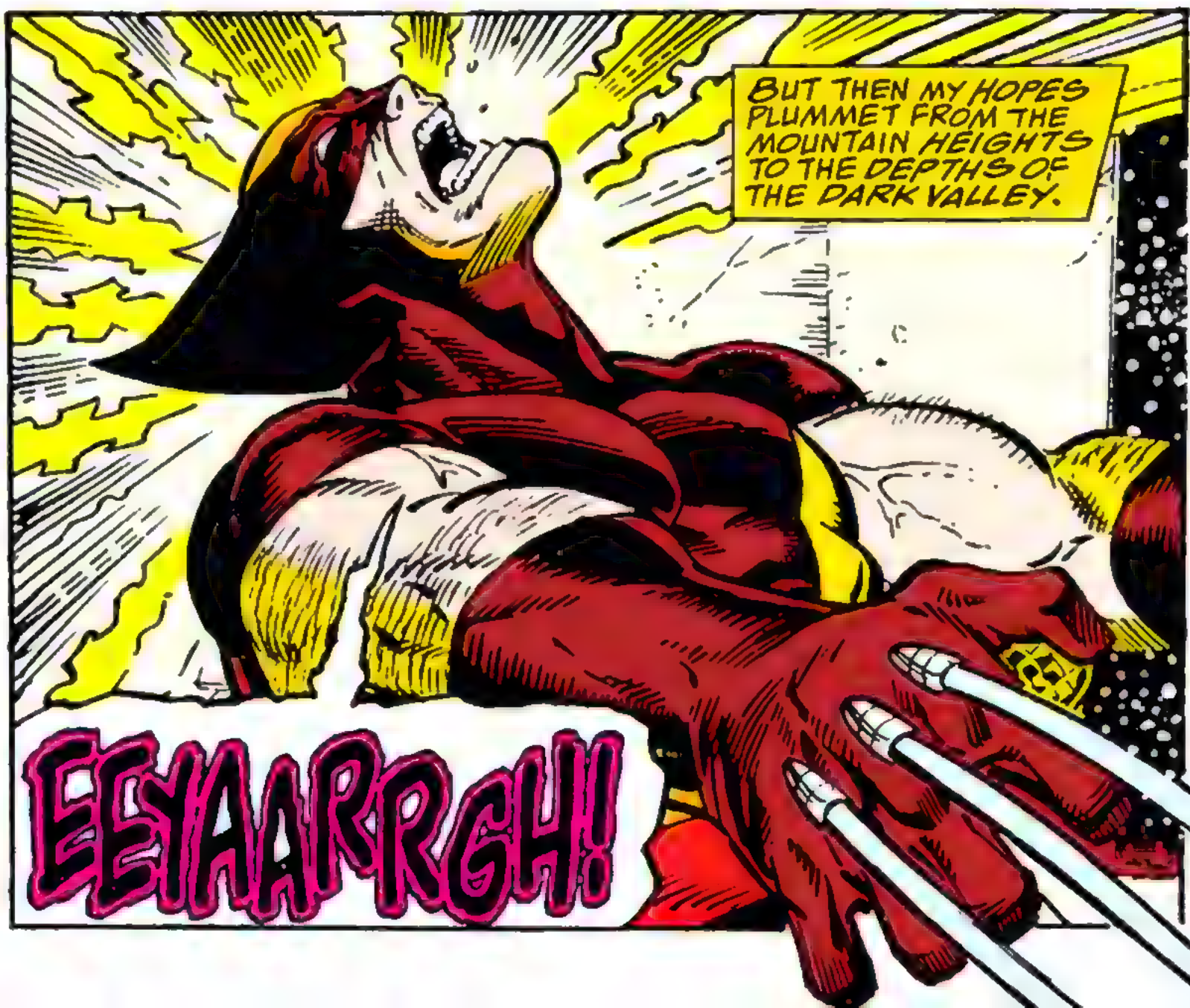
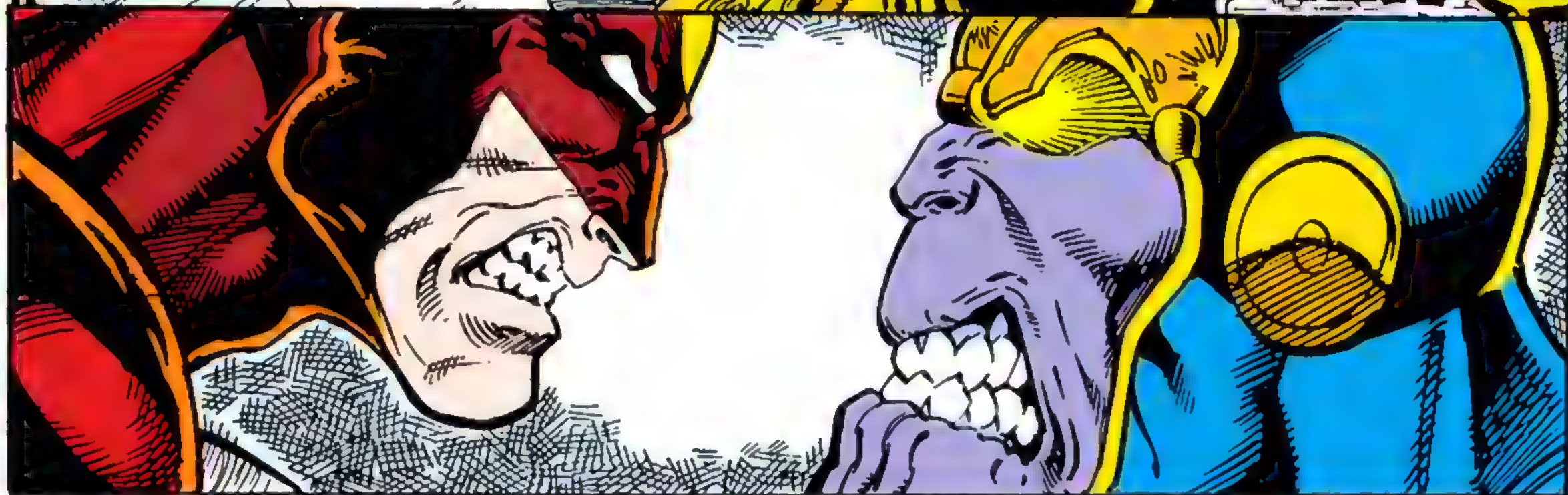


HE IS ONE OF THE X-MEN--GOES BY THE NAME OF WOLVERINE!





OF ALL THE COMBAT-  
ANTS, HE WOULD'VE  
BEEN ONE OF THE  
LAST I THOUGHT  
CAPABLE OF DELIV-  
ERING THE DEATH  
BLOW.



BUT THEN MY HOPES  
PLUMMET FROM THE  
MOUNTAIN HEIGHTS  
TO THE DEPTHS OF  
THE DARK VALLEY.

EEYARRGH!



ADAMANTIUM  
BONE TRANSFORMS  
INTO SPONGY  
RUBBER, AND THE  
MOST VICIOUS OF  
EARTH'S DEFENDERS  
FLOPS TO THE  
GROUND, HELPLESS.

DOOM, YOU  
RETURN FOR  
ANOTHER  
SHOT AT MY  
GAUNTLET?

ONLY DEATH  
WILL STAY MY  
HAND!

THAT CAN BE  
ARRANGED!

WE GROW  
RESTLESS  
AND WISH  
TO JOIN THE  
BATTLE!

NOT  
YET.

NOW BE GONE, BEFORE  
THANOS SENSES YOUR  
PRESENCE!

WARLOCK!  
THAT IS MIGHTY  
ETERNITY  
YOU SPEAK TO!

JUST ANOTHER PIECE  
ON THE GAME BOARD  
AS FAR AS I'M  
CONCERNED.

THAT'S TRULY  
ALL THIS IS TO  
YOU, ISN'T IT?

**A  
GAME!**



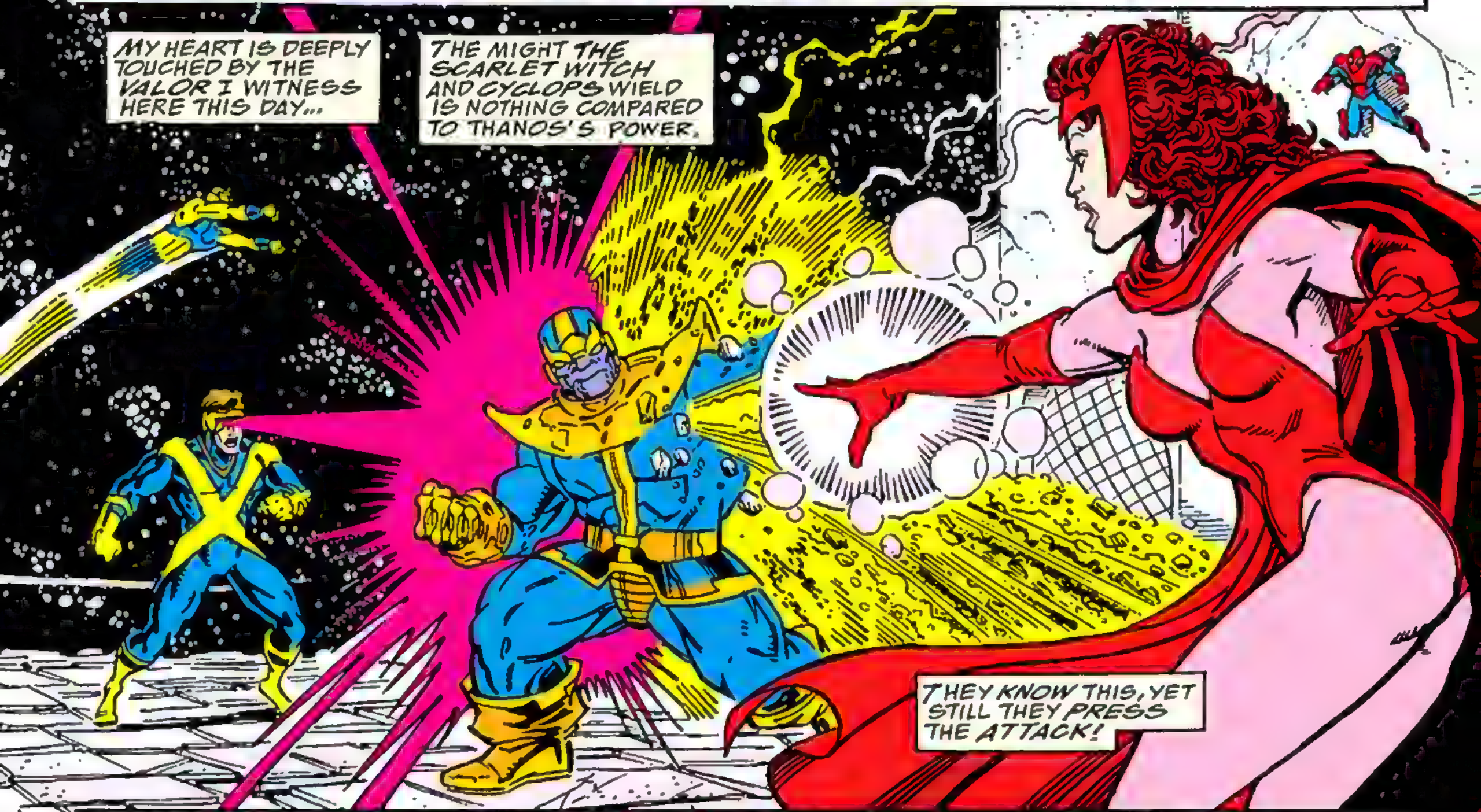


IF I ALLOW  
IT TO BE ANY  
MORE THAN  
THAT...

...I COULD  
NOT GO  
ON.

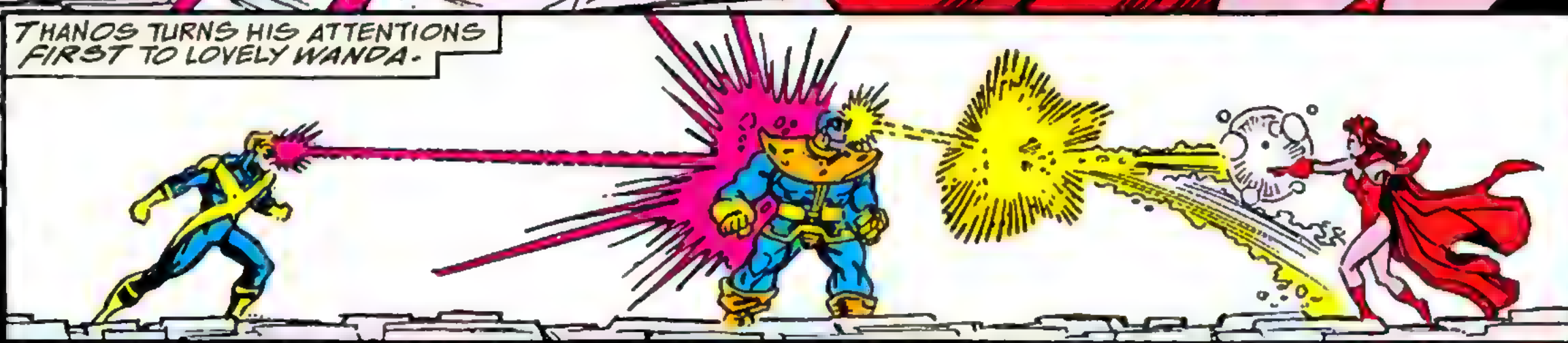
MY HEART IS DEEPLY  
TOUCHED BY THE  
VALOR I WITNESS  
HERE THIS DAY...

THE MIGHT THE  
SCARLET WITCH  
AND CYCLOPS WIELD  
IS NOTHING COMPARED  
TO THANOS'S POWER.

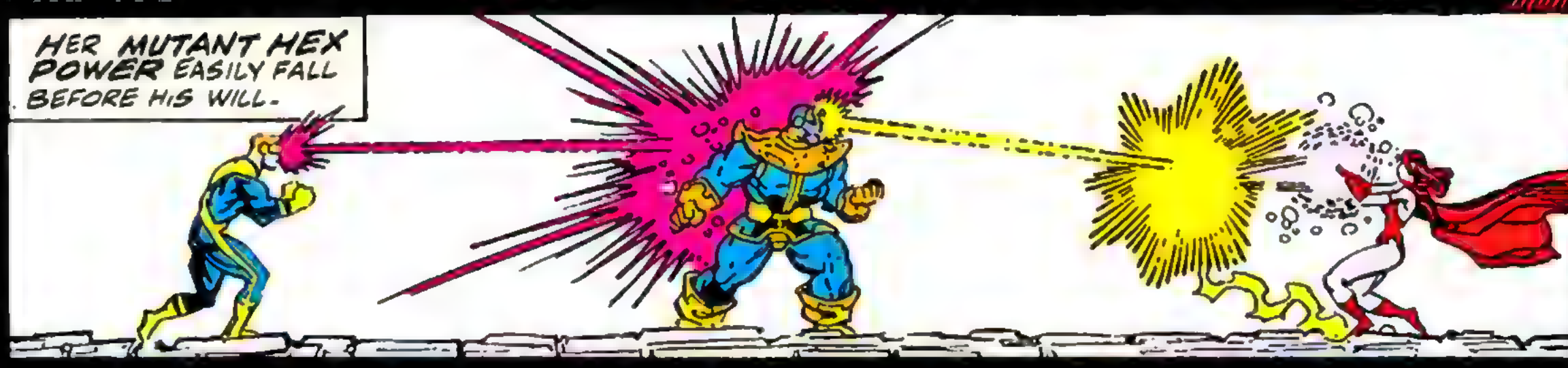


THEY KNOW THIS, YET  
STILL THEY PRESS  
THE ATTACK!

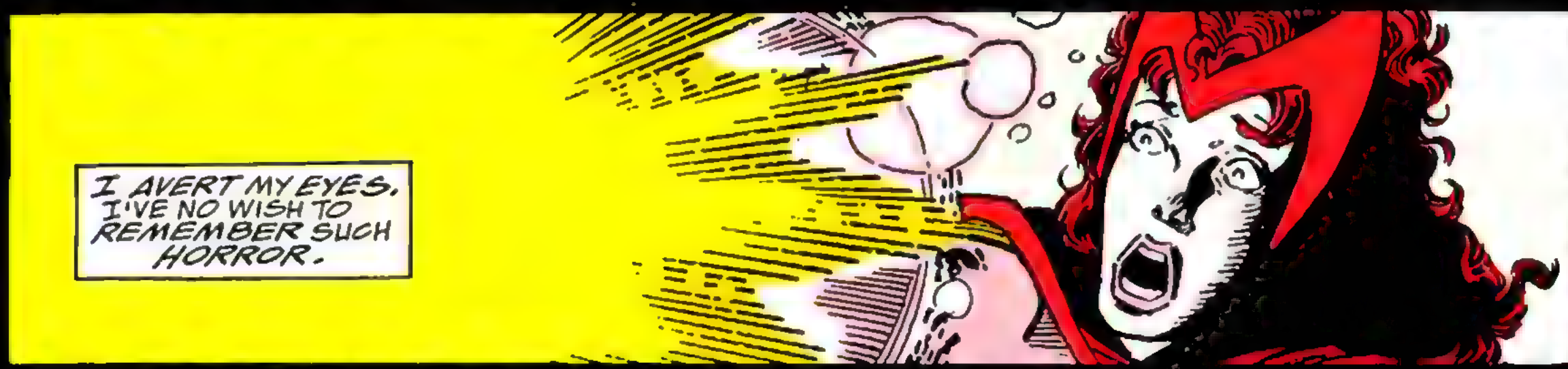
THANOS TURNS HIS ATTENTIONS  
FIRST TO LOVELY WANDA.



HER MUTANT HEX  
POWER EASILY FALL  
BEFORE HIS WILL.



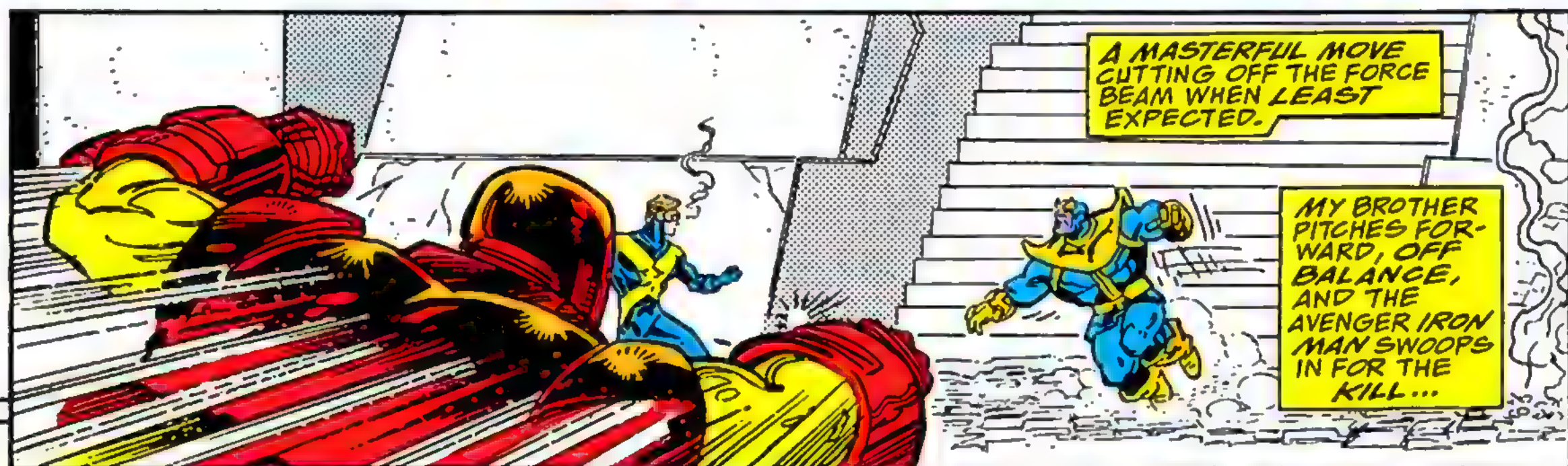
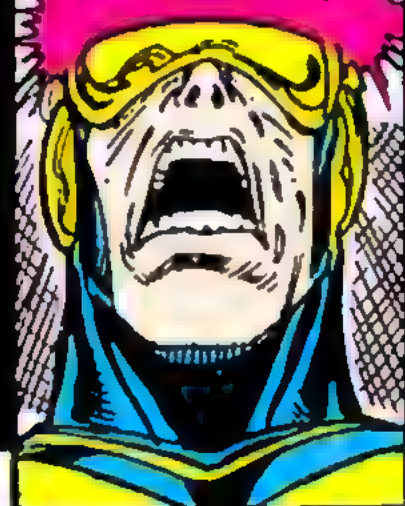
I AVERT MY EYES,  
I'VE NO WISH TO  
REMEMBER SUCH  
HORROR.





**WANDA!**

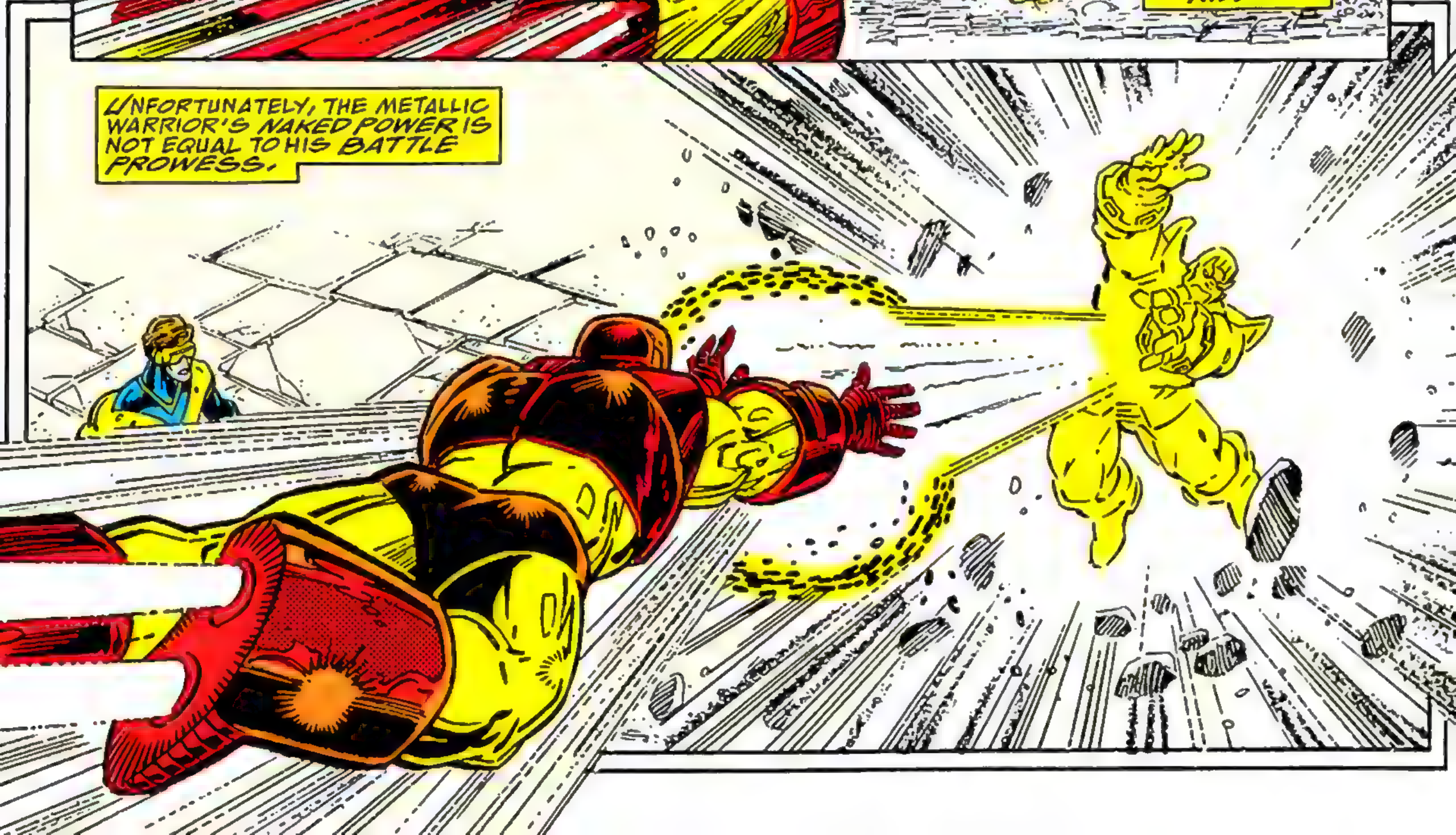
AND, NOW MY  
BRIGHT-EYED  
FOE, WE  
SHALL--



A MASTERFUL MOVE  
CUTTING OFF THE FORCE  
BEAM WHEN LEAST  
EXPECTED.

MY BROTHER  
PITCHES FOR-  
WARD, OFF  
BALANCE,  
AND THE  
AVENGER IRON  
MAN SWOOPS  
IN FOR THE  
KILL...

UNFORTUNATELY, THE METALLIC  
WARRIOR'S NAKED POWER IS  
NOT EQUAL TO HIS BATTLE  
PROWESS.



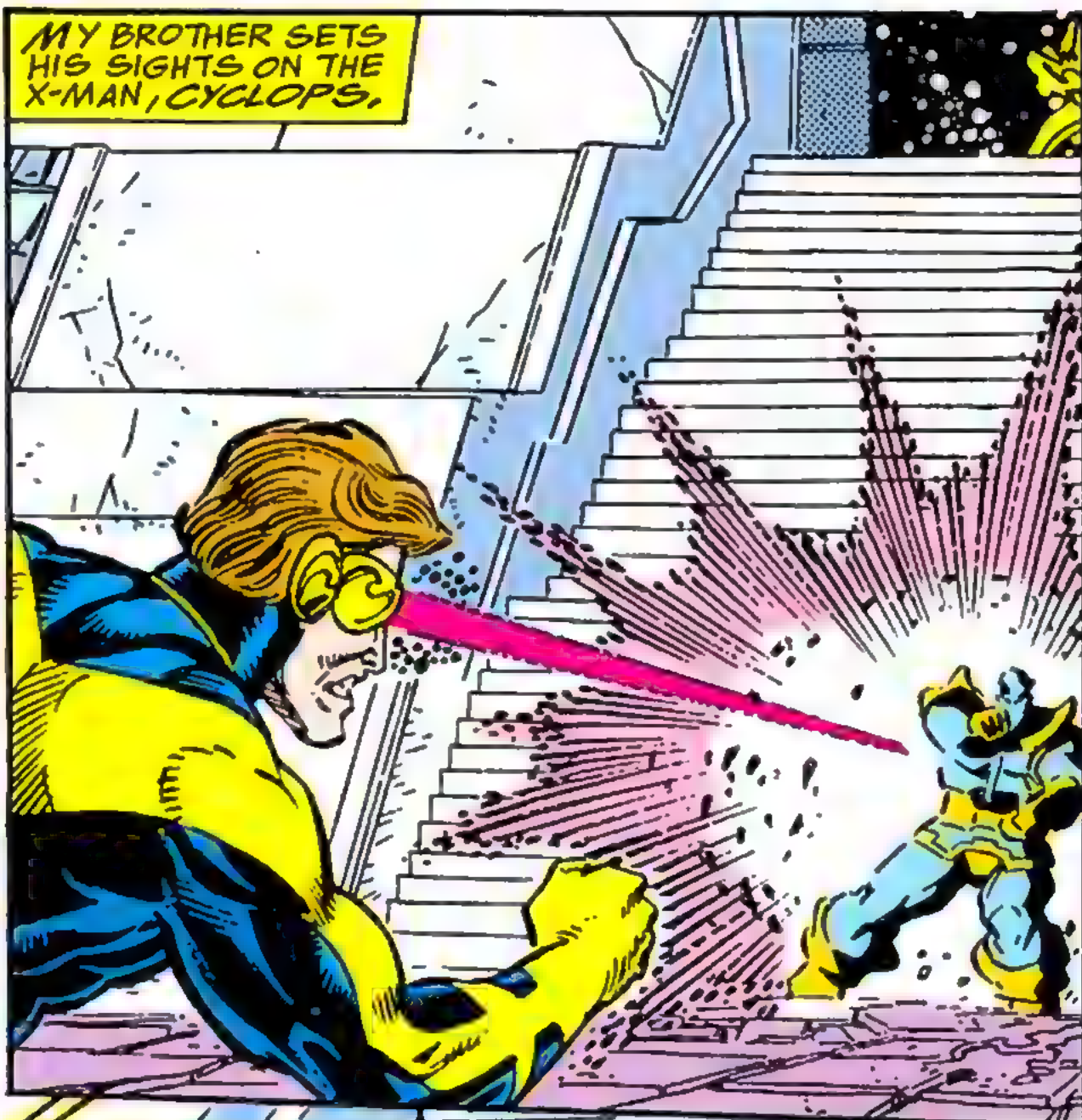


THEN THANOS'S NEWLY  
CREATED PERFECT WOMAN,  
TERRAXIA, JOINS THE  
FRAY...

THE MAD GOD  
ALLOWS HER TO  
VENT HER ANGER  
AND FRUSTRATION ON THE  
GOLDEN  
AVENGER.



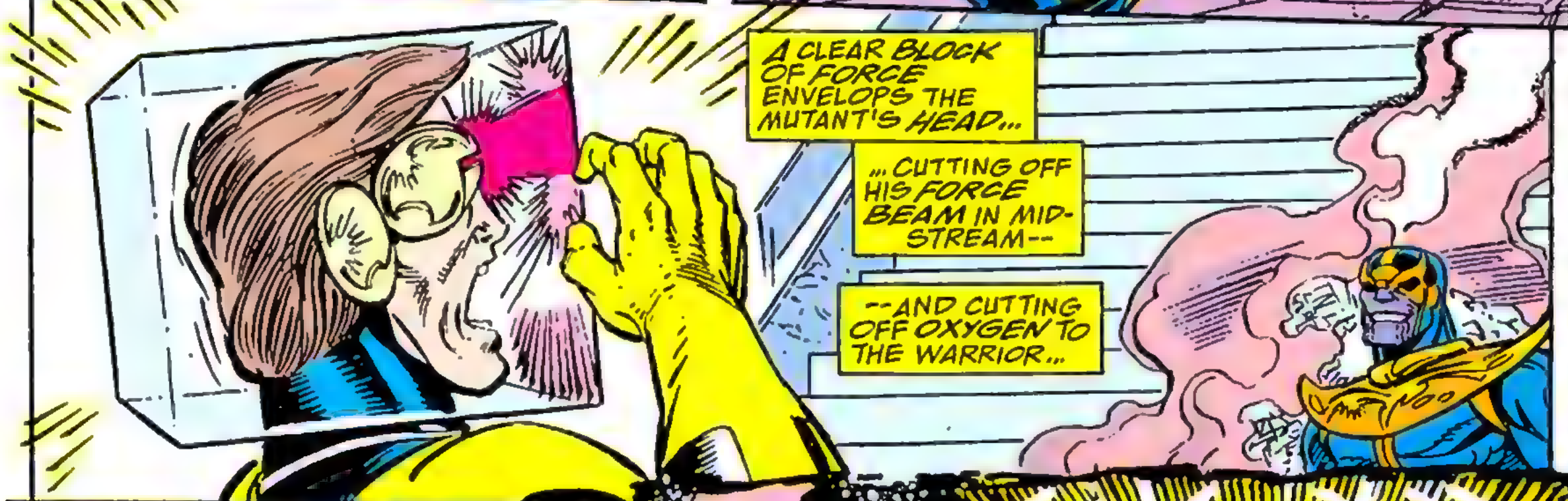
MY BROTHER SETS  
HIS SIGHTS ON THE  
X-MAN, CYCLOPS,



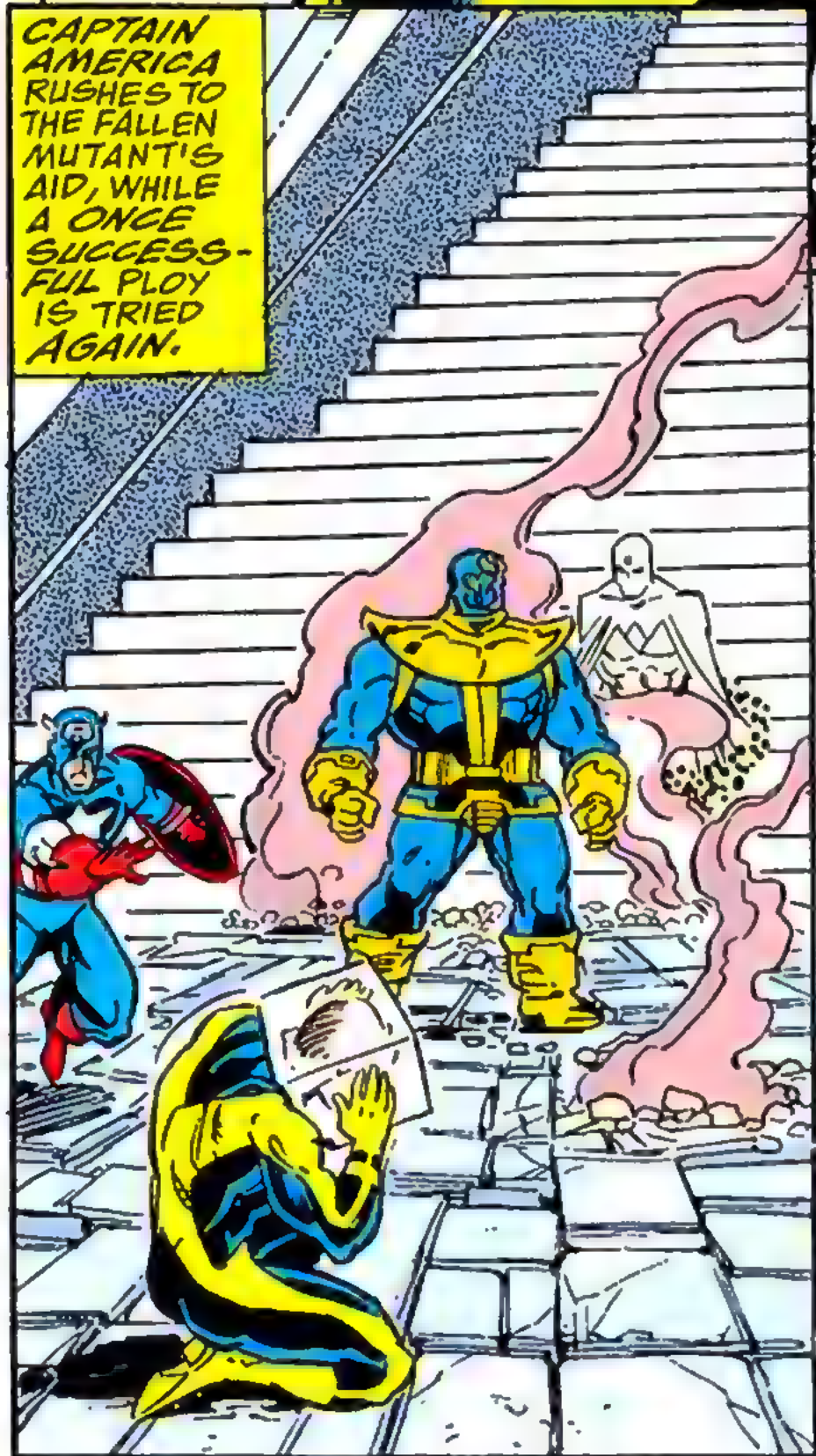
A CLEAR BLOCK  
OF FORCE  
ENVELOPS THE  
MUTANT'S HEAD...

... CUTTING OFF  
HIS FORCE  
BEAM IN MID-  
STREAM--

--AND CUTTING  
OFF OXYGEN TO  
THE WARRIOR...



CAPTAIN  
AMERICA  
RUSHES TO  
THE FALLEN  
MUTANT'S  
AID, WHILE  
A ONCE  
SUCCESS-  
FUL PLOY  
IS TRIED  
AGAIN.

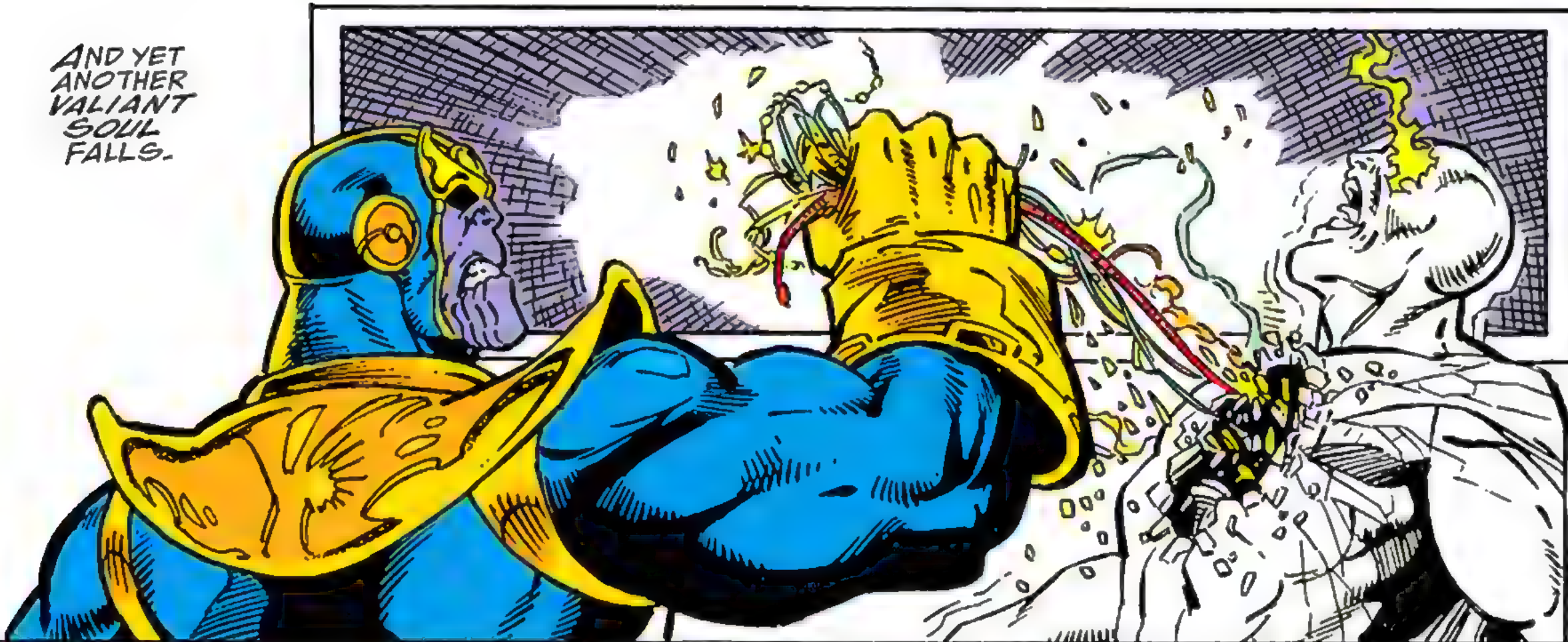


BUT THANOS  
NEVER FALLS  
FOR THE  
SAME TRICK  
TWICE.





AND YET  
ANOTHER  
VALIANT  
SOUL  
FALLS.



JUST A LITTLE  
FARTHER...



ALMOST  
THERE...

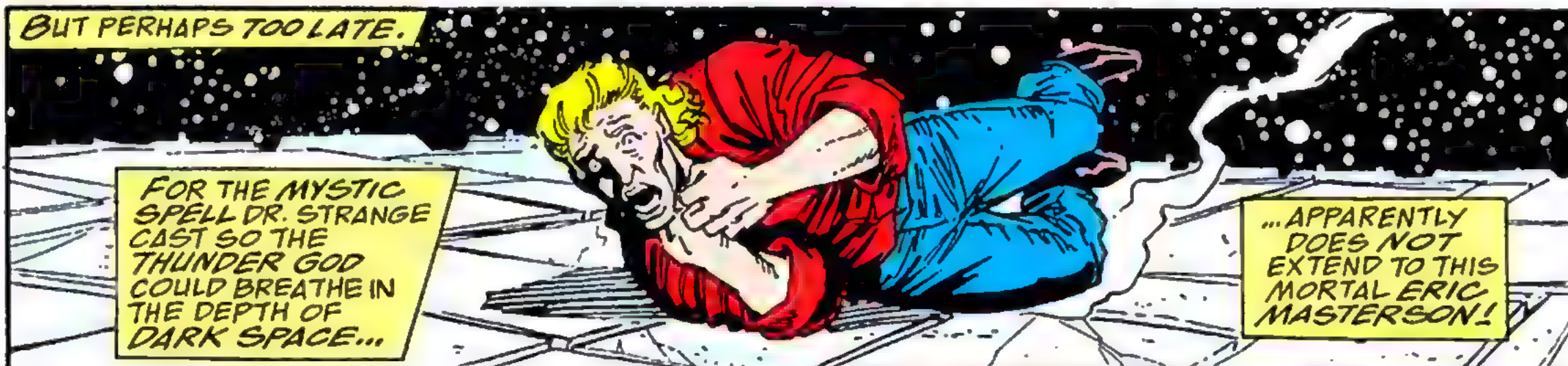


I MADE  
IT!



BUT PERHAPS TOO LATE.

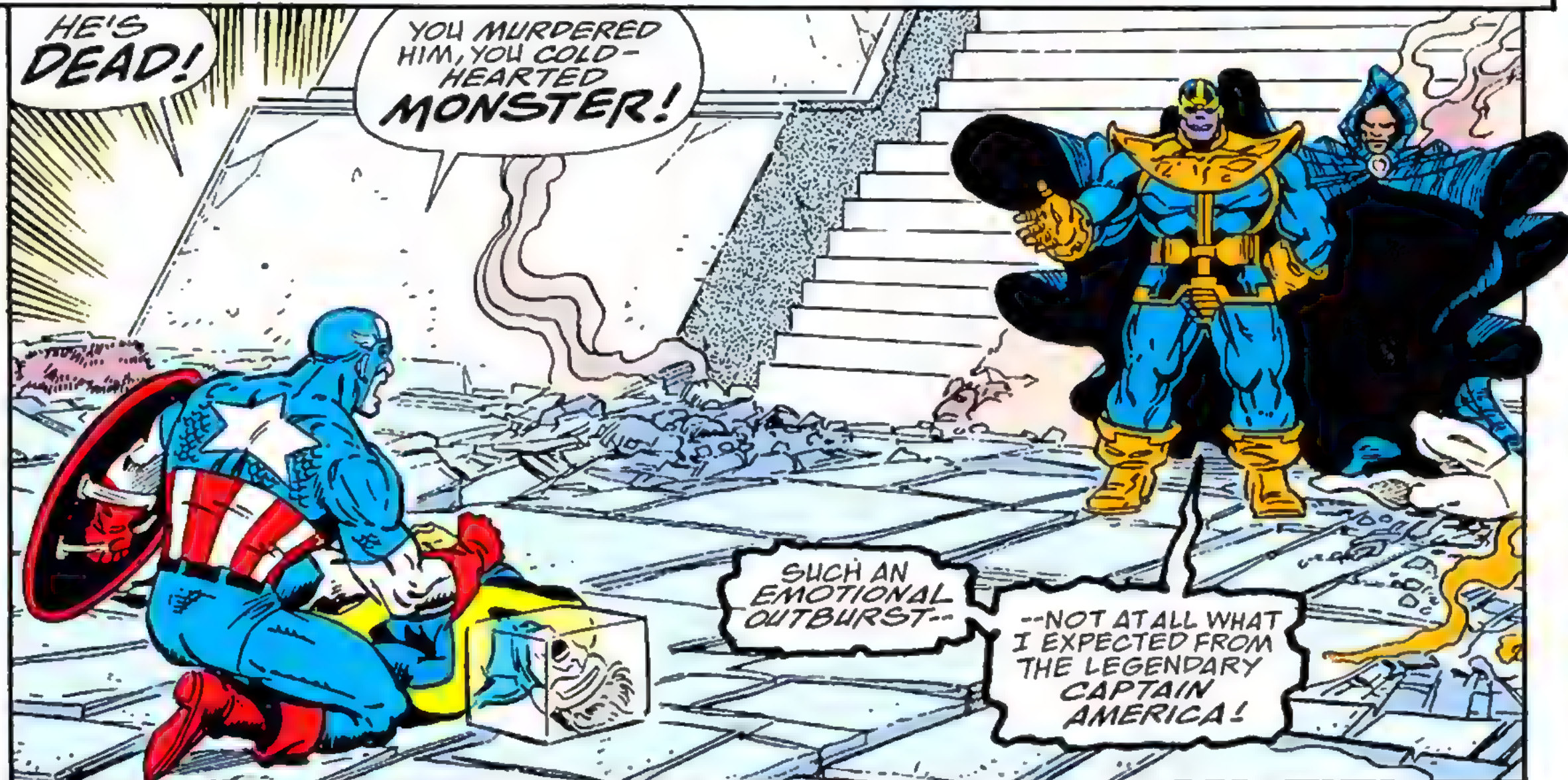
FOR THE MYSTIC  
SPELL DR. STRANGE  
CAST SO THE  
THUNDER GOD  
COULD BREATHE IN  
THE DEPTH OF  
DARK SPACE...



...APPARENTLY  
DOES NOT  
EXTEND TO THIS  
MORTAL ERIC  
MASTERSON!

HE'S  
DEAD!

YOU MURDERED  
HIM, YOU COLD-  
HEARTED  
MONSTER!



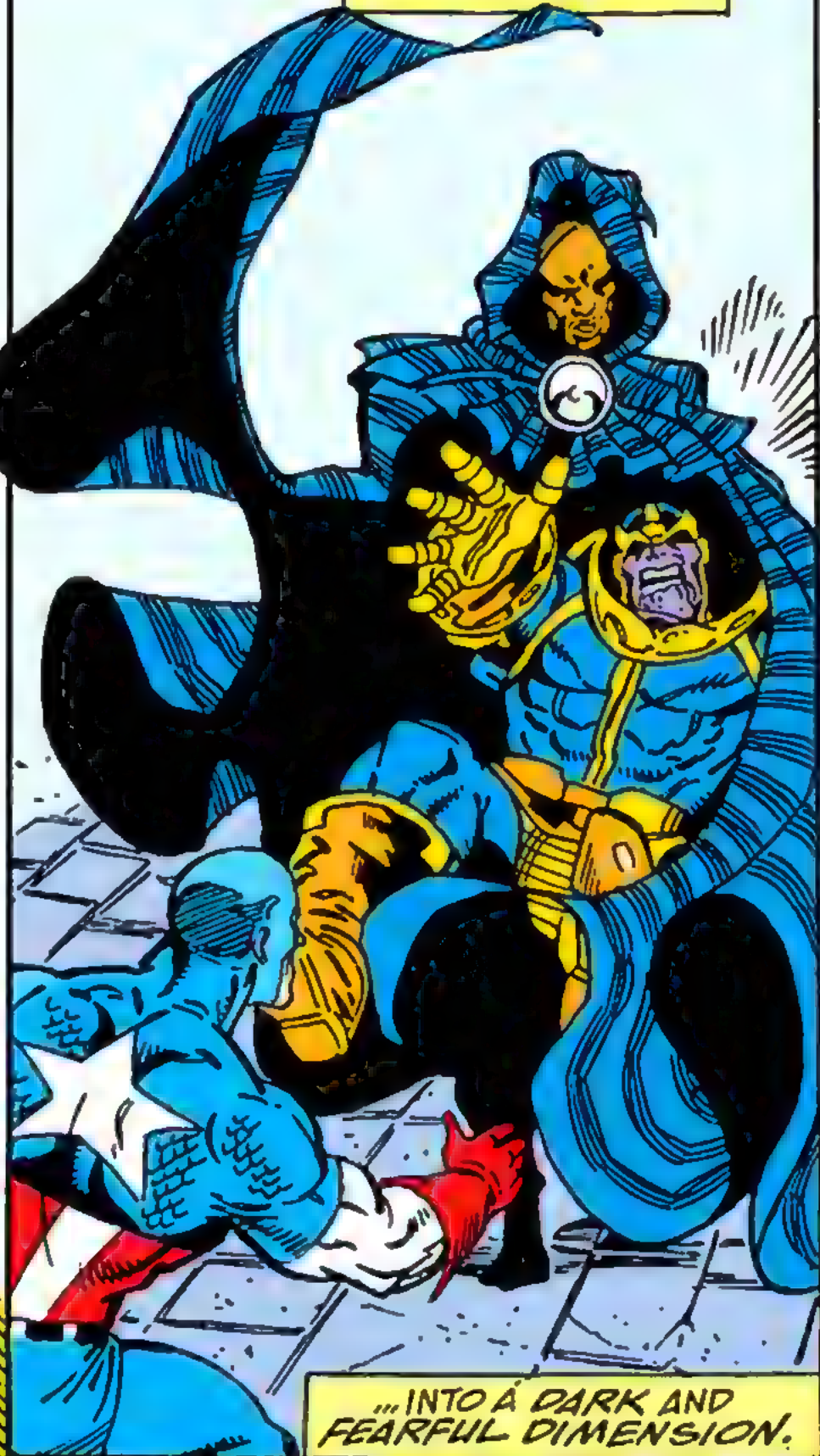
SUCH AN  
EMOTIONAL  
OUTBURST--

--NOT AT ALL WHAT  
I EXPECTED FROM  
THE LEGENDARY  
CAPTAIN  
AMERICA!



UNLESS IT  
SERVES TO  
CREATE A  
CLEVER  
DIVERSION.

THE BEING KNOWN  
AS CLOAK DRAWS  
THE CRAZED TITAN  
INTO THE EBON  
FOLDS OF HIS  
CAPE!!!



...INTO A DARK AND  
FEARFUL DIMENSION.

YOU  
DID IT,  
CLOAK!

BUT CAN  
YOU HOLD  
HIM?!

DON'T  
KNOW--

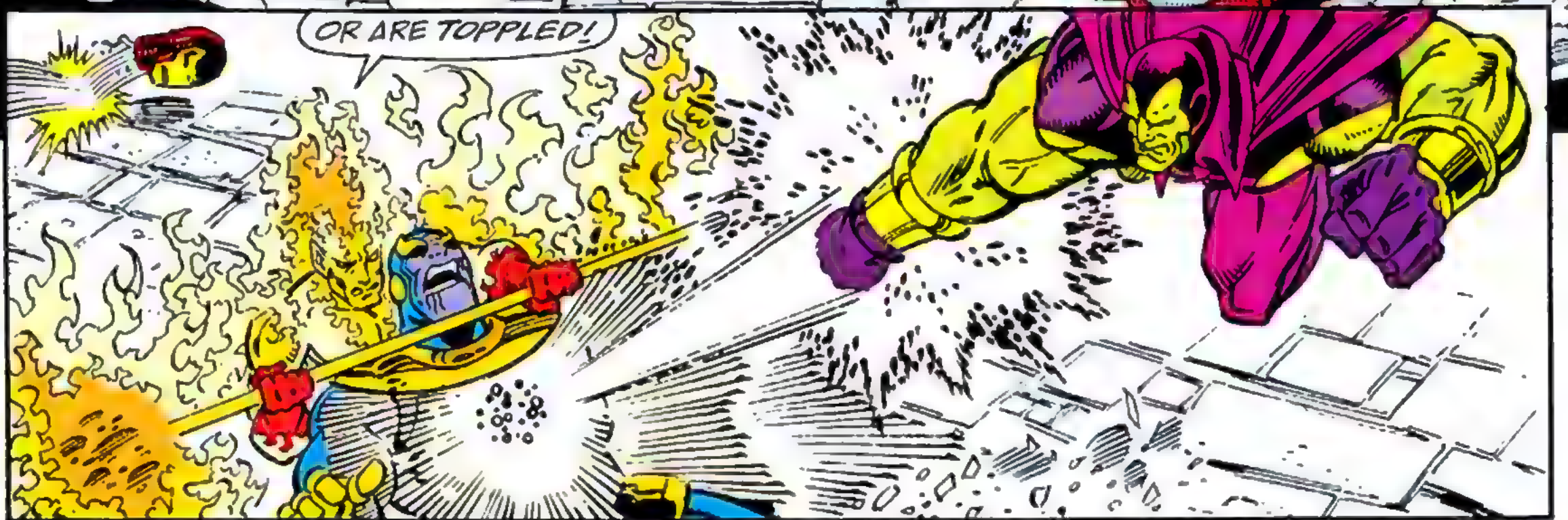
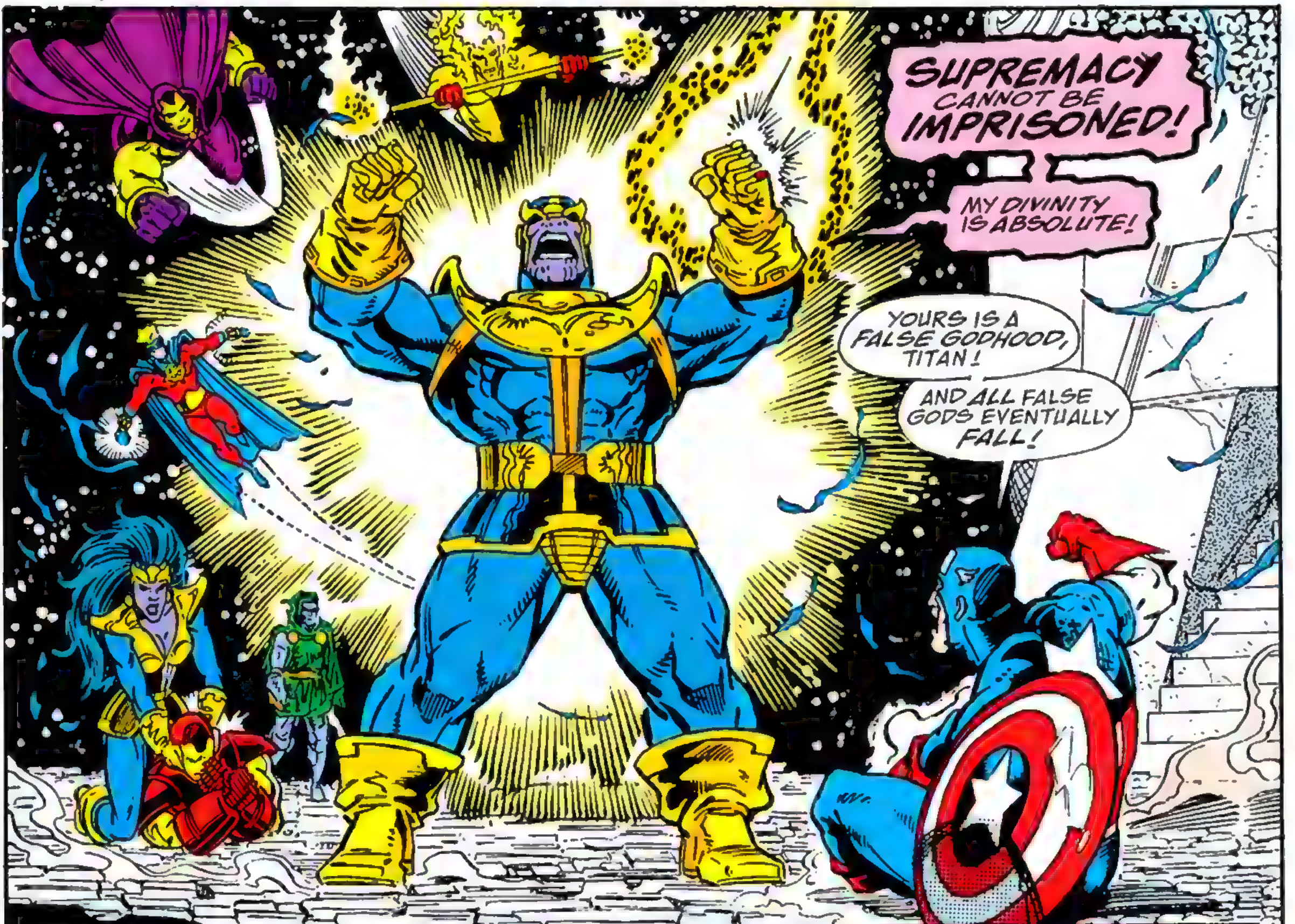
I THINK...  
I...



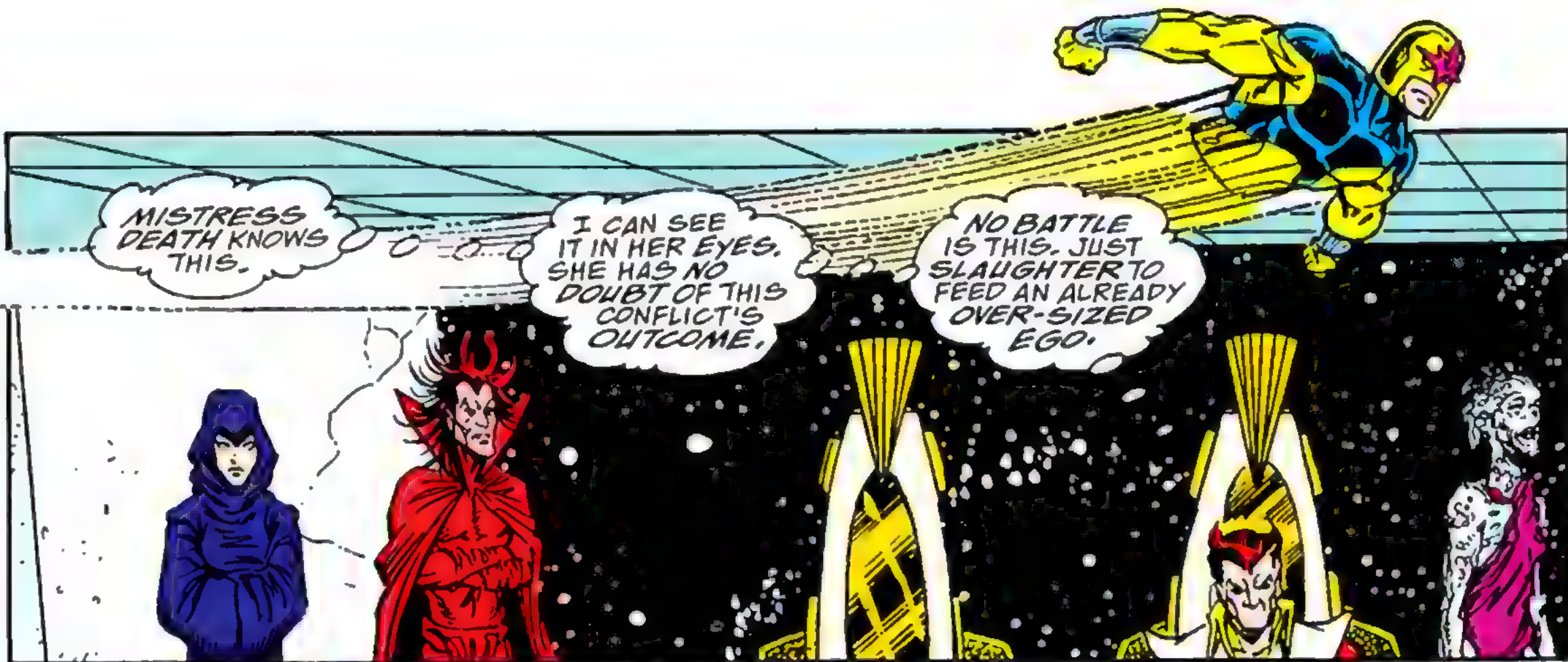
**No!**







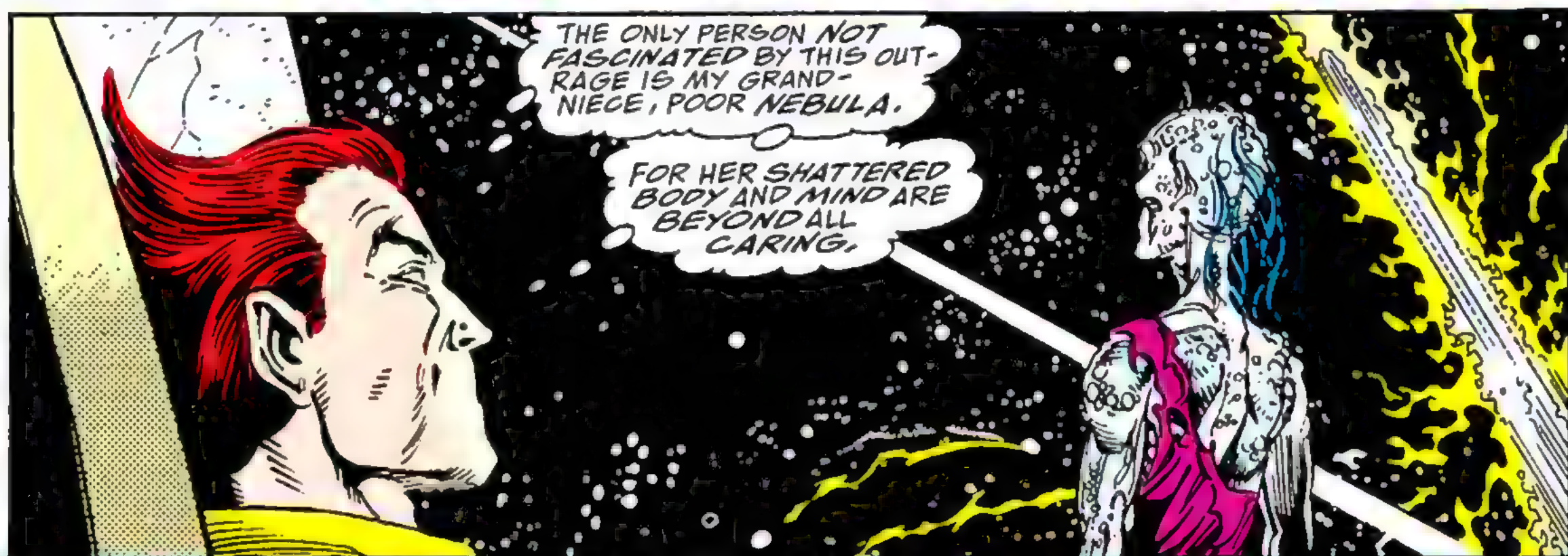




MISTRESS DEATH KNOWS THIS.

I CAN SEE IT IN HER EYES. SHE HAS NO DOUBT OF THIS CONFLICT'S OUTCOME.

NO BATTLE IS THIS. JUST SLAUGHTER TO FEED AN ALREADY OVER-SIZED EGO.



THE ONLY PERSON NOT FASCINATED BY THIS OUT-RAGE IS MY GRAND-NIECE, POOR NEBULA.

FOR HER SHATTERED BODY AND MIND ARE BEYOND ALL CARING.



SHE IS BUT ANOTHER TWISTED CREATION OF THANOS'S BLACK SOUL AND INFINITE POWER.



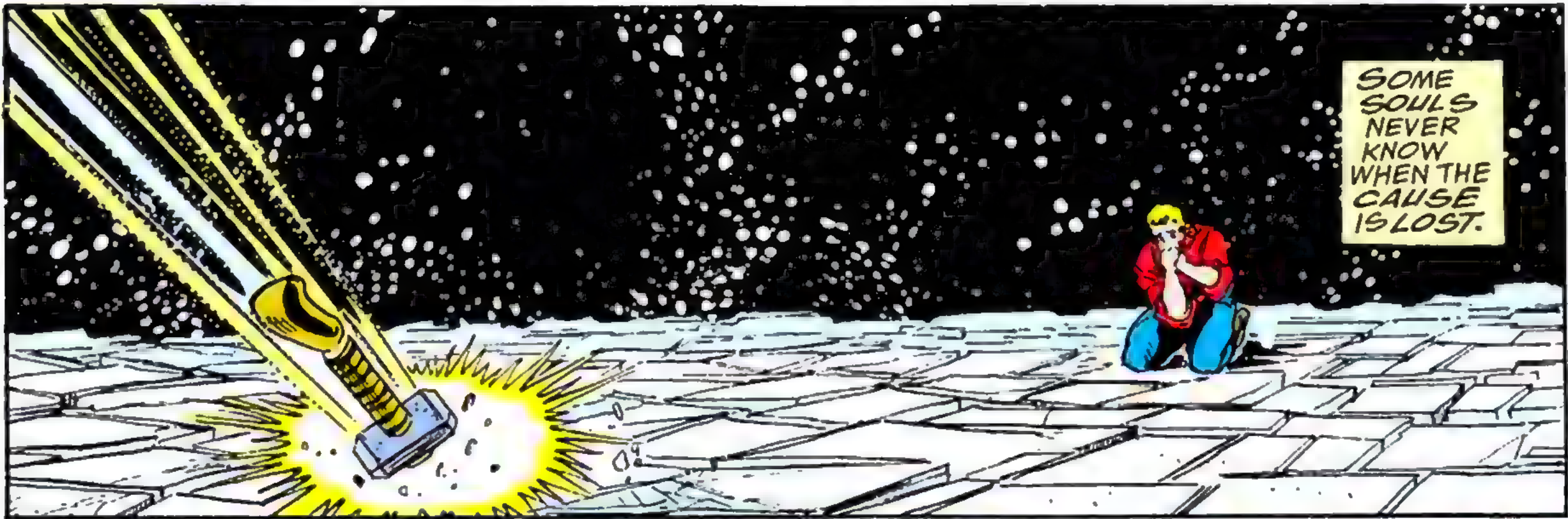
HE MADE HER THE CHARRED CARICATURE ON THE BRINK SHE NOW IS.



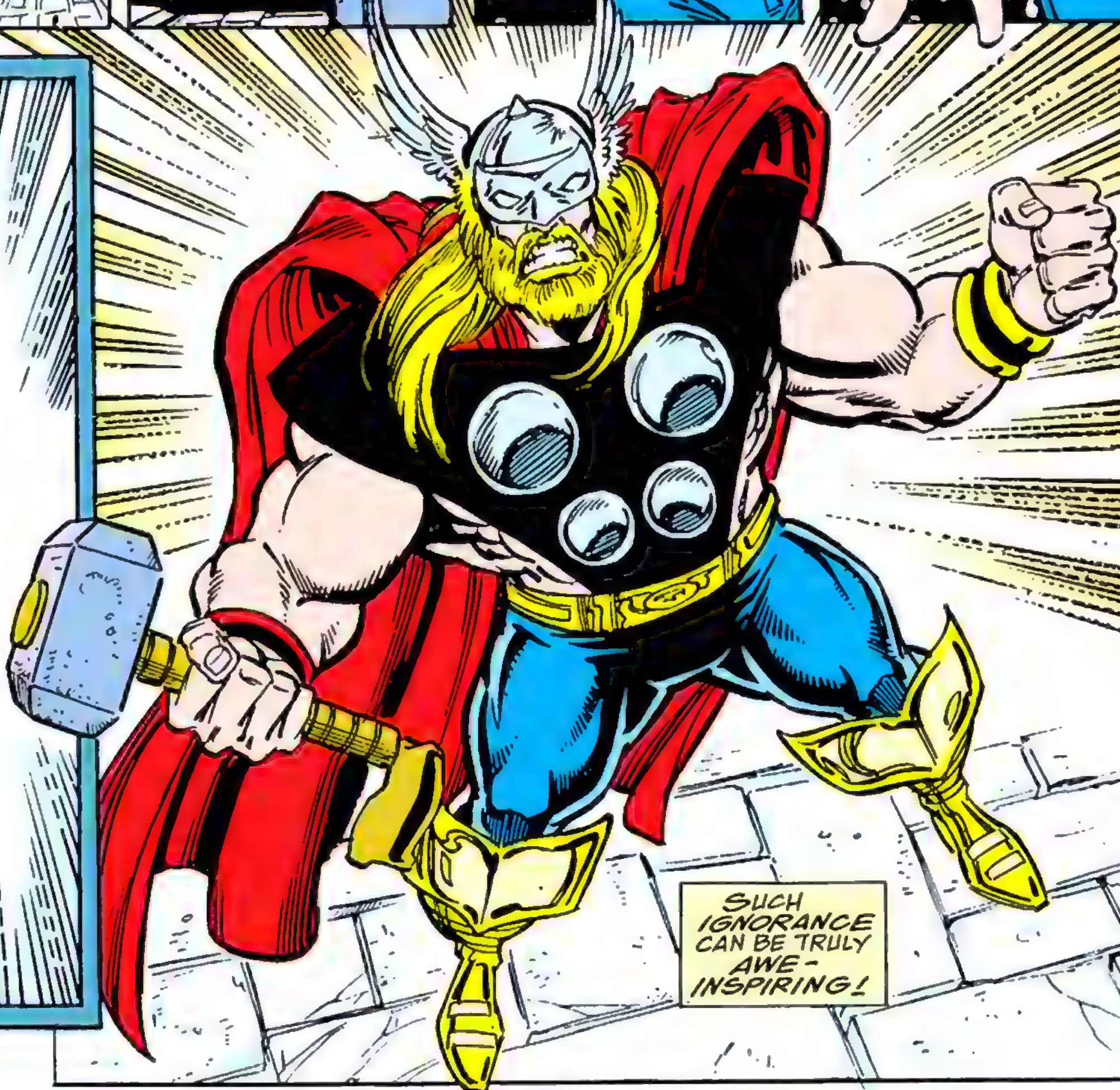
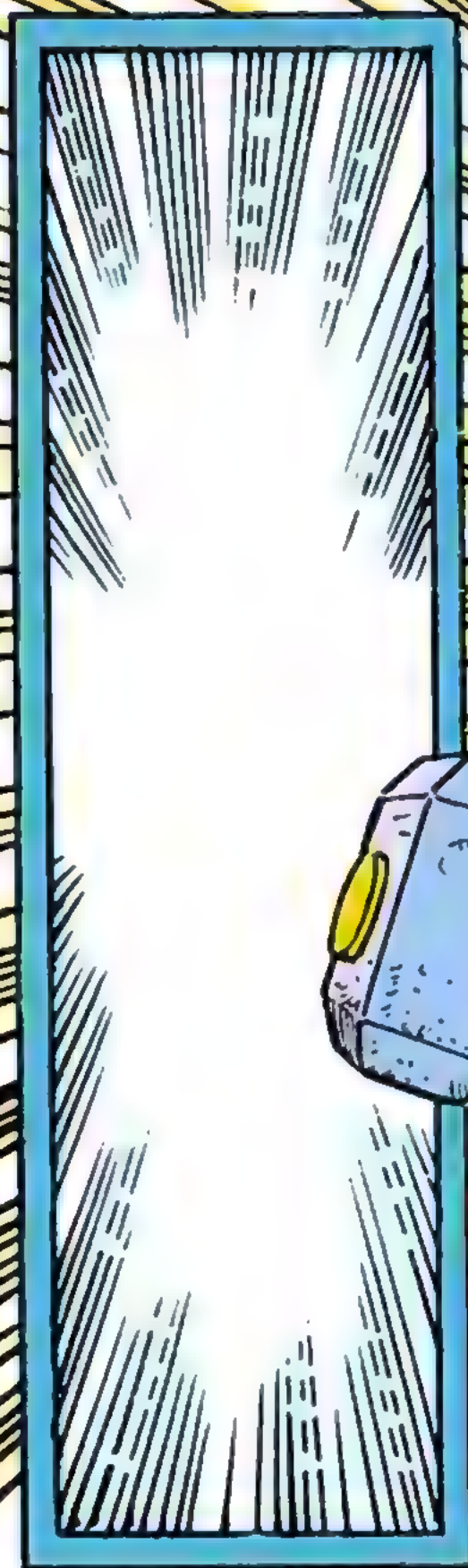
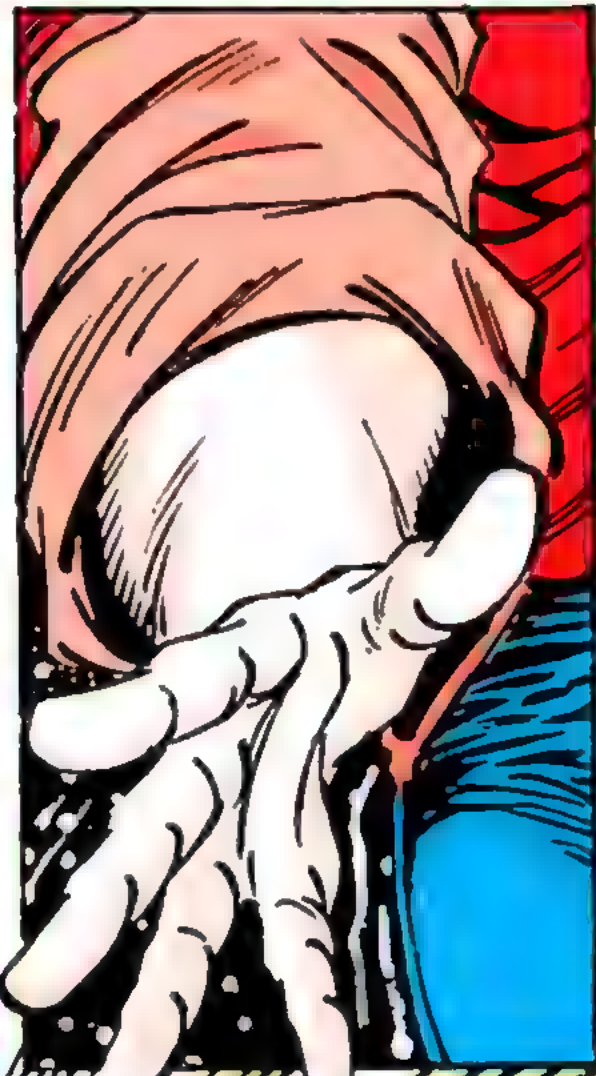
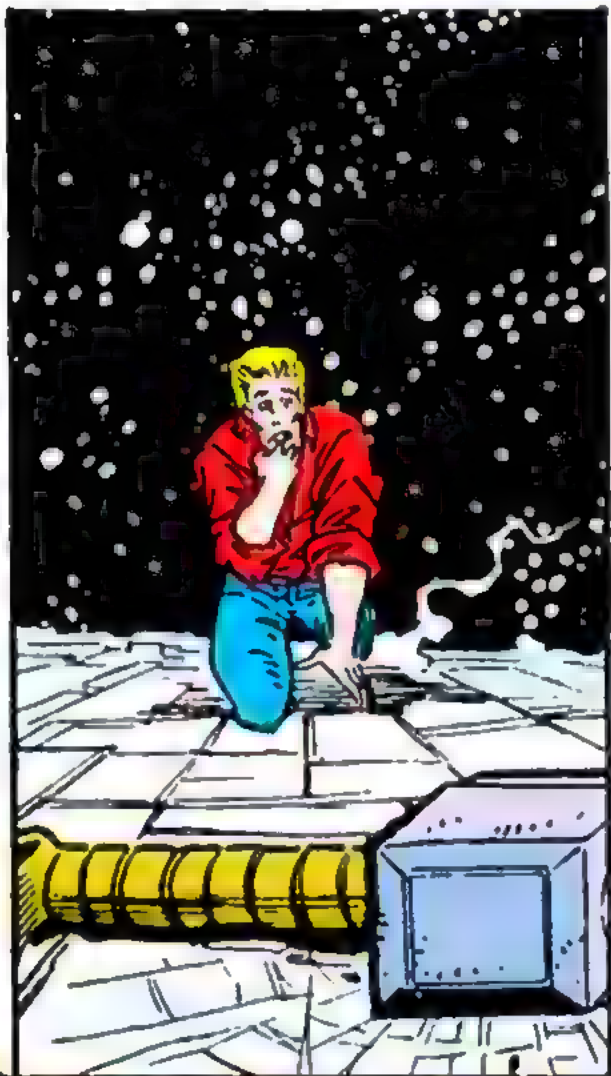
SHE WOULD BE FAR BETTER OFF DEAD.

STILL, SOME DREAMS REFUSE TO DIE.





SOME  
SOULS  
NEVER  
KNOW  
WHEN THE  
CAUSE  
IS LOST.



SUCH  
IGNORANCE  
CAN BE TRULY  
AWE-  
INSPIRING!



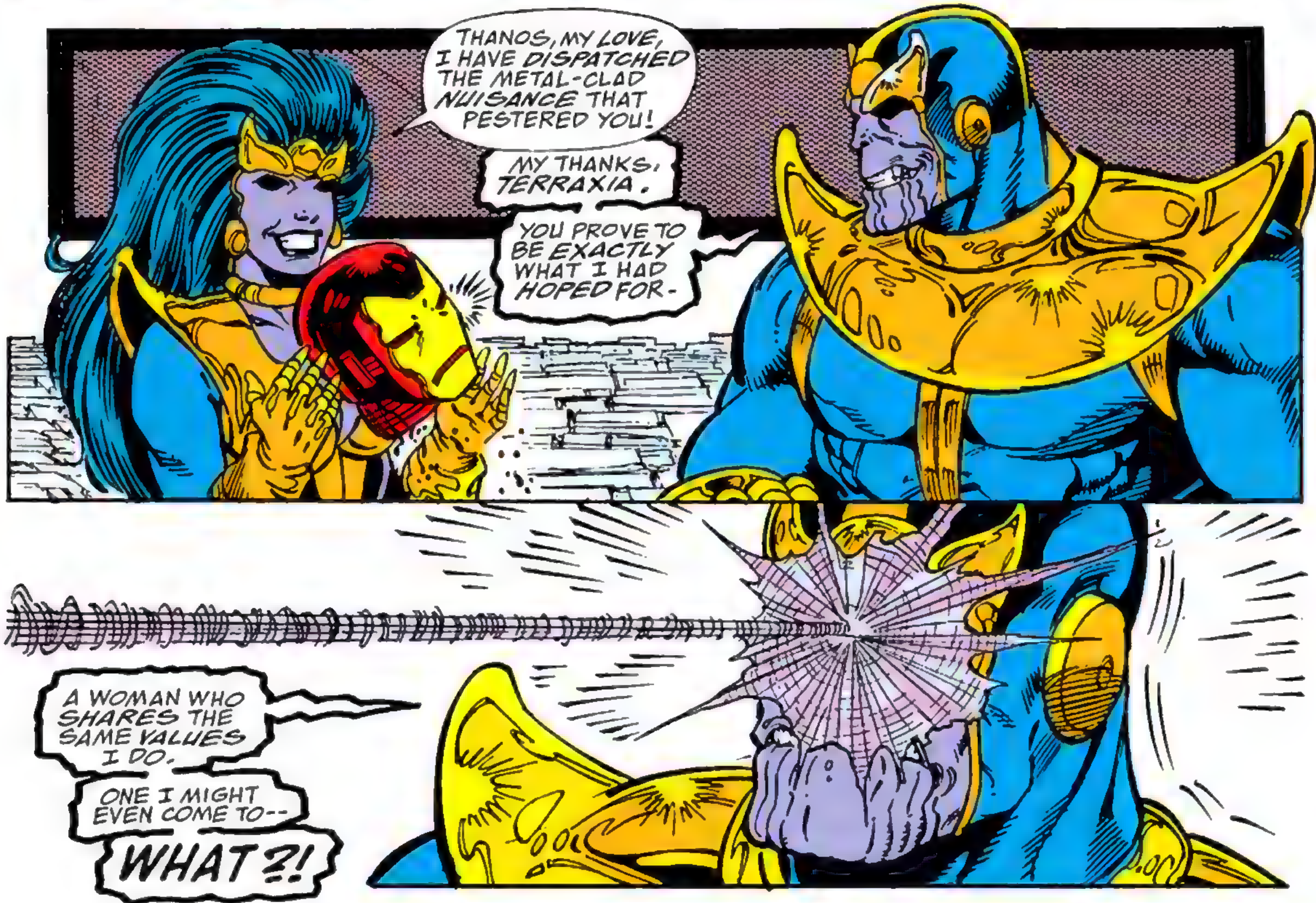


A TIME PORTAL  
OPENS.

AND MIGHTY  
FIRELORD AND  
DRAK THE  
DESTROYER  
FIND ITS PULL  
IRRESISTIBLE.



THEY FALL,  
LOST WITHIN  
EARTH'S  
PREHISTORIC  
PAST.



THANOS, MY LOVE,  
I HAVE DISPATCHED  
THE METAL-CLAD  
NUISANCE THAT  
PESTERED YOU!

MY THANKS,  
TERRAXIA.

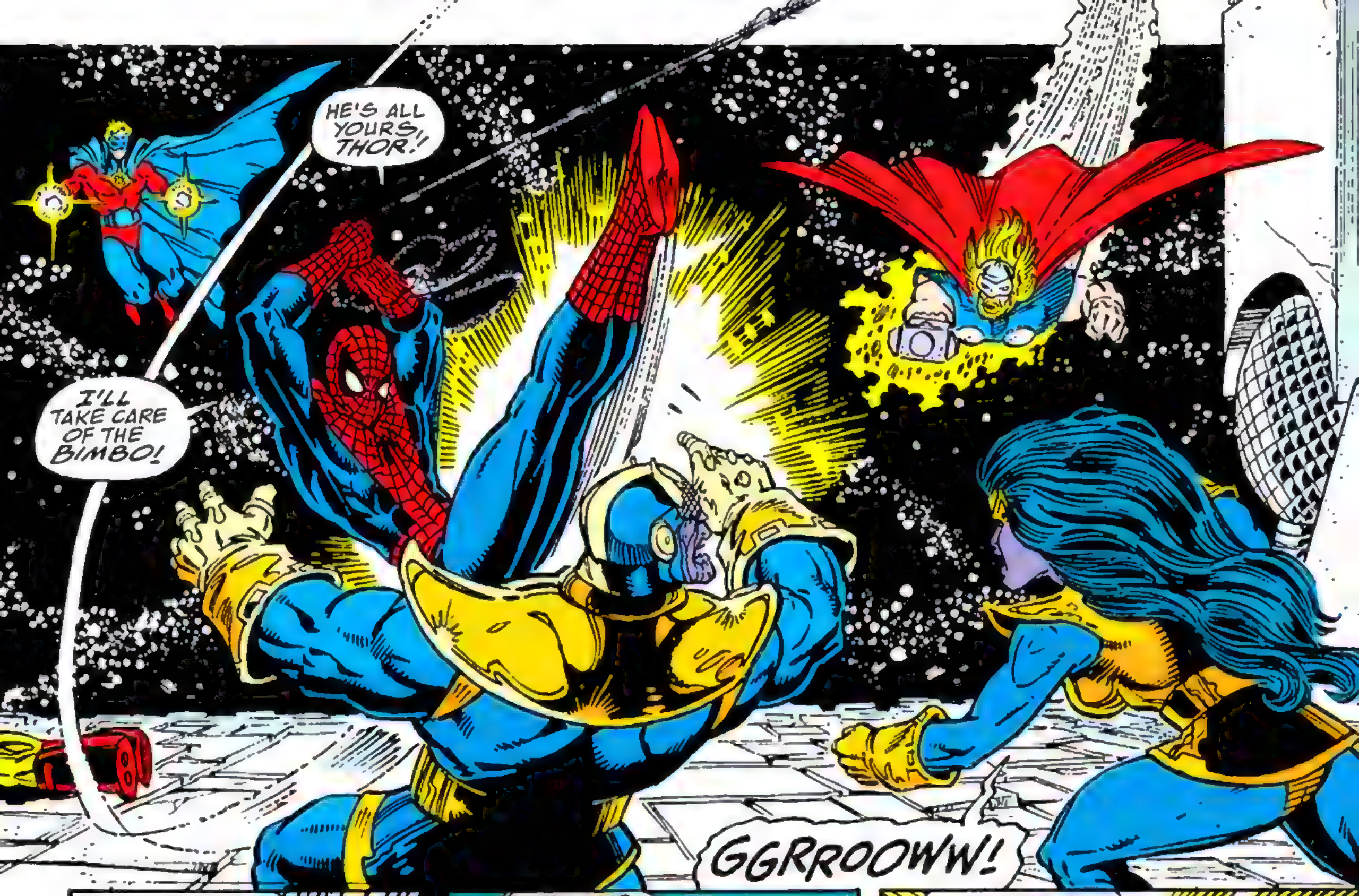
YOU PROVE TO  
BE EXACTLY  
WHAT I HAD  
HOPED FOR.

A WOMAN WHO  
SHARES THE  
SAME VALUES  
I DO.

ONE I MIGHT  
EVEN COME TO--

WHAT?!





HE'S ALL YOURS, THOR!!

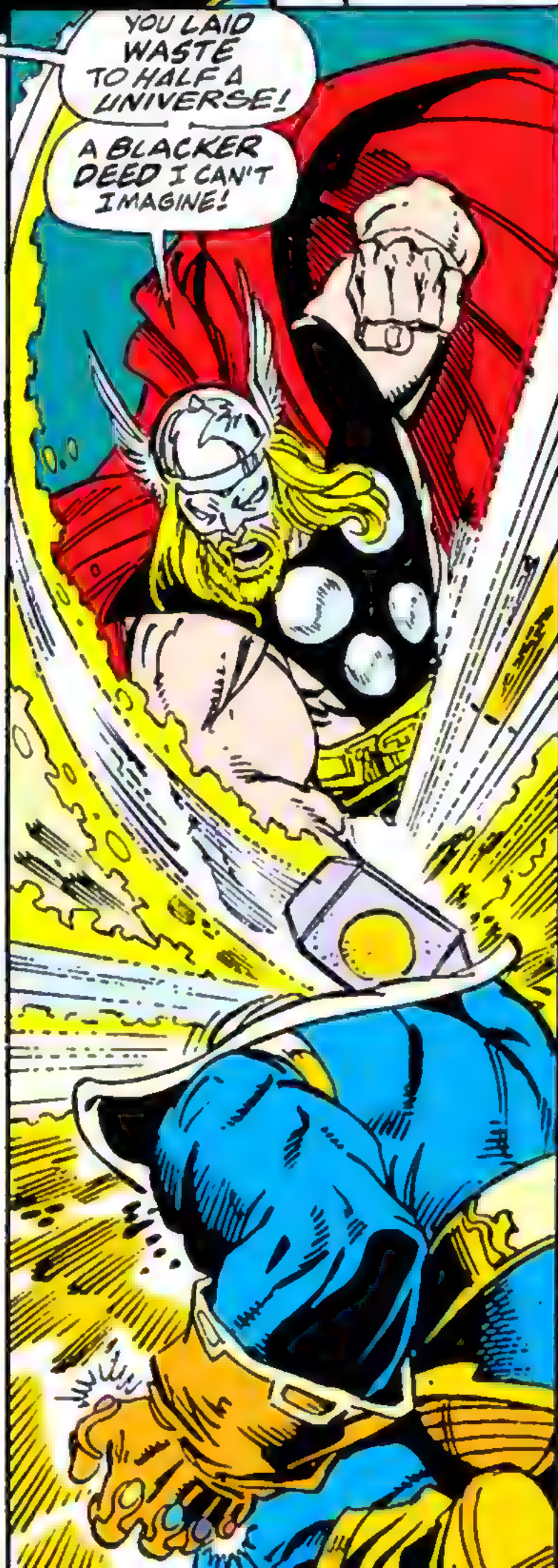
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE BIMBO!

GGRROOWN!



NOW YOU'RE IN FOR IT, MADMAN!

I THINK.



YOU LAID WASTE TO HALF A UNIVERSE!

A BLACKER DEED I CAN'T IMAGINE!

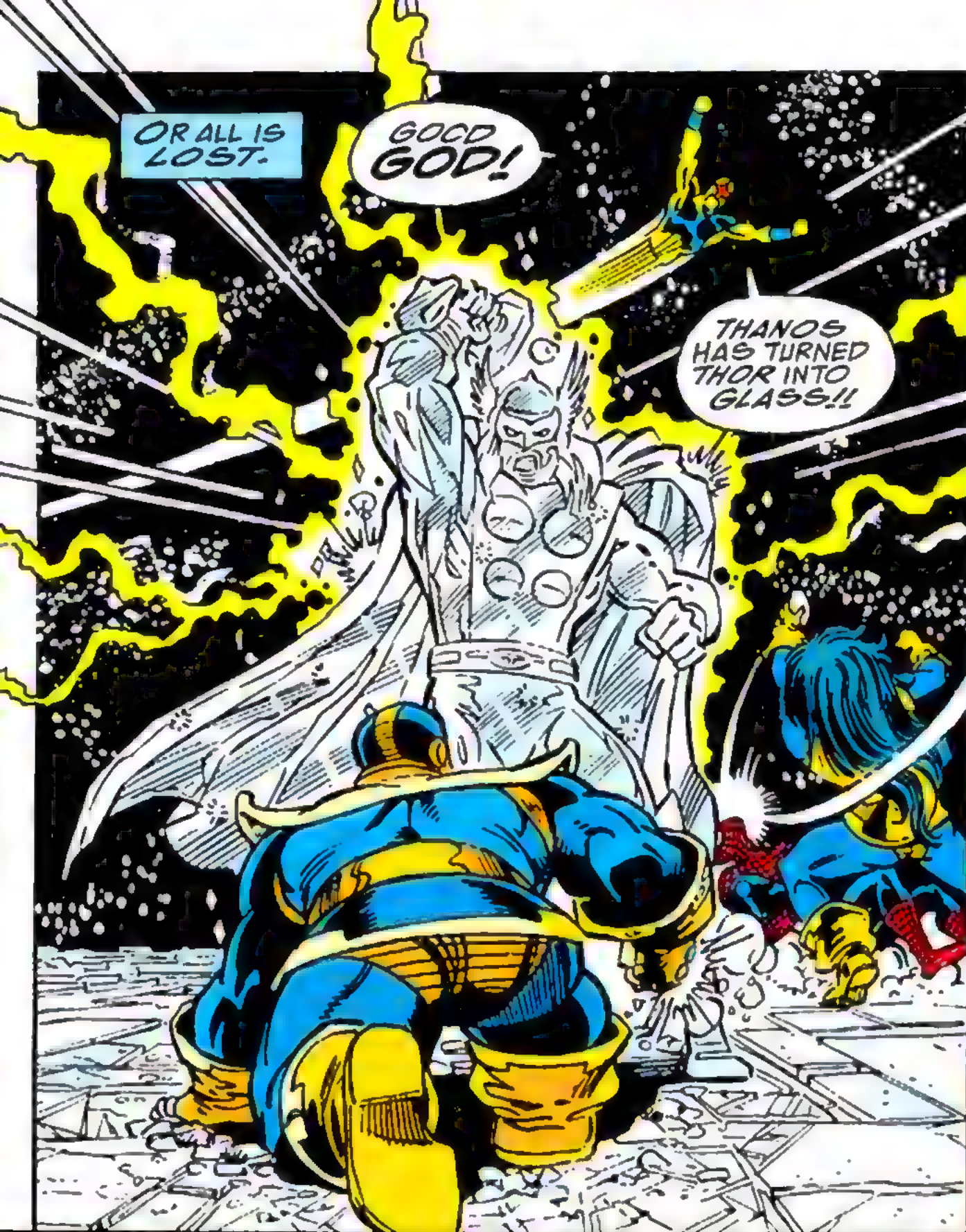


IT'S TIME TO PAY THE PIPER!

THAT'S IT, THOR! STAY NOT YOUR HAND!

THANOS MUST DIE!!





OR ALL IS LOST.

GODD GOD!

THANOS HAS TURNED THOR INTO GLASS!!

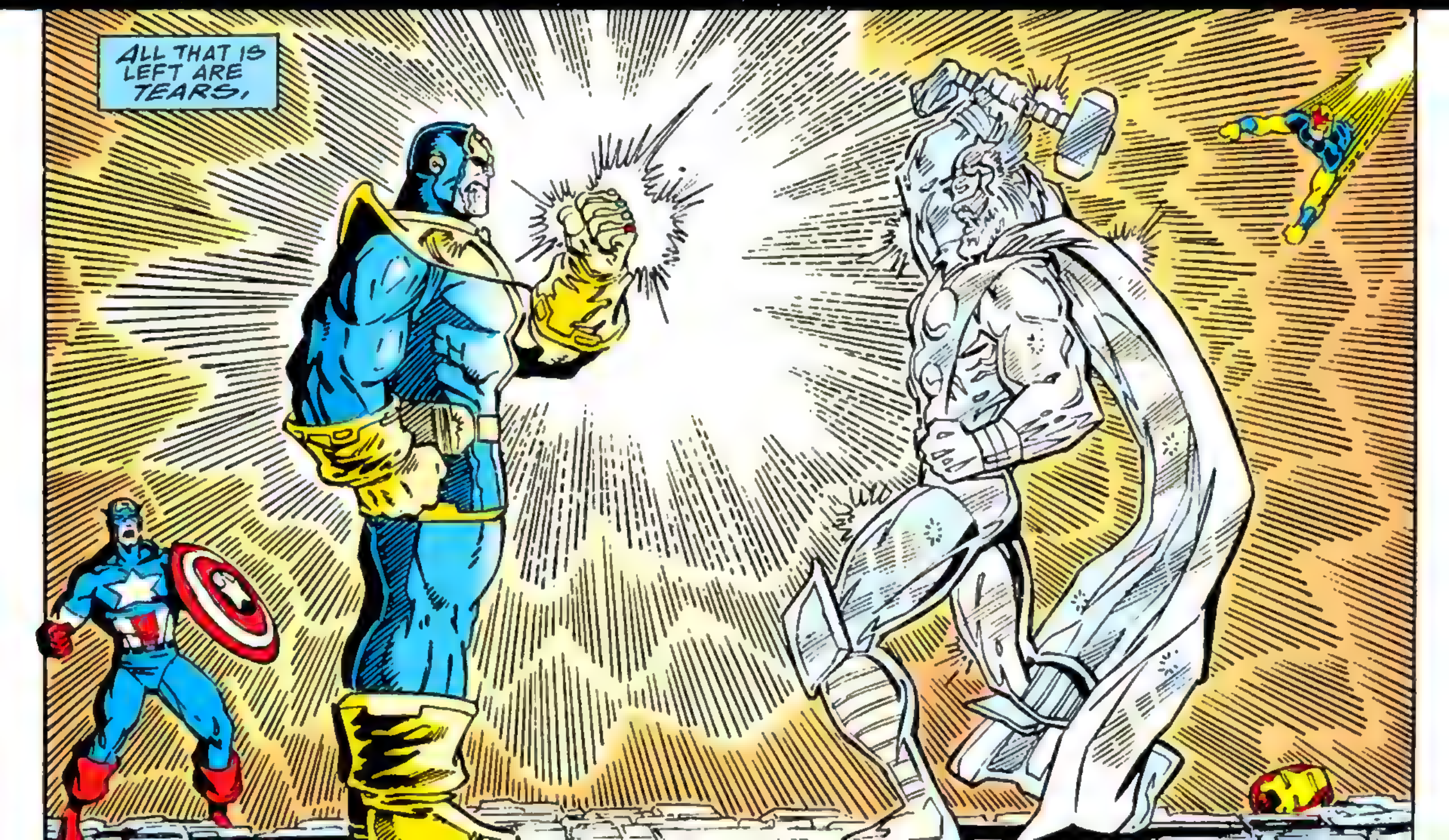


A GRIM, BOTTOMLESS ACCEPTANCE OF OUR FATE FINALLY CLAIMS ME.



THANOS IS INEVITABLE.

ALL LIGHT IS LOST.



ALL THAT IS LEFT ARE TEARS.



AND THE  
ECHOES OF  
DREAMS  
SHATTERED.

BACK OFF,  
PRUNE  
FACE!

NO ONE'S  
BUSTIN' UP  
THOR WHILE  
NOVA'S  
AROUND.

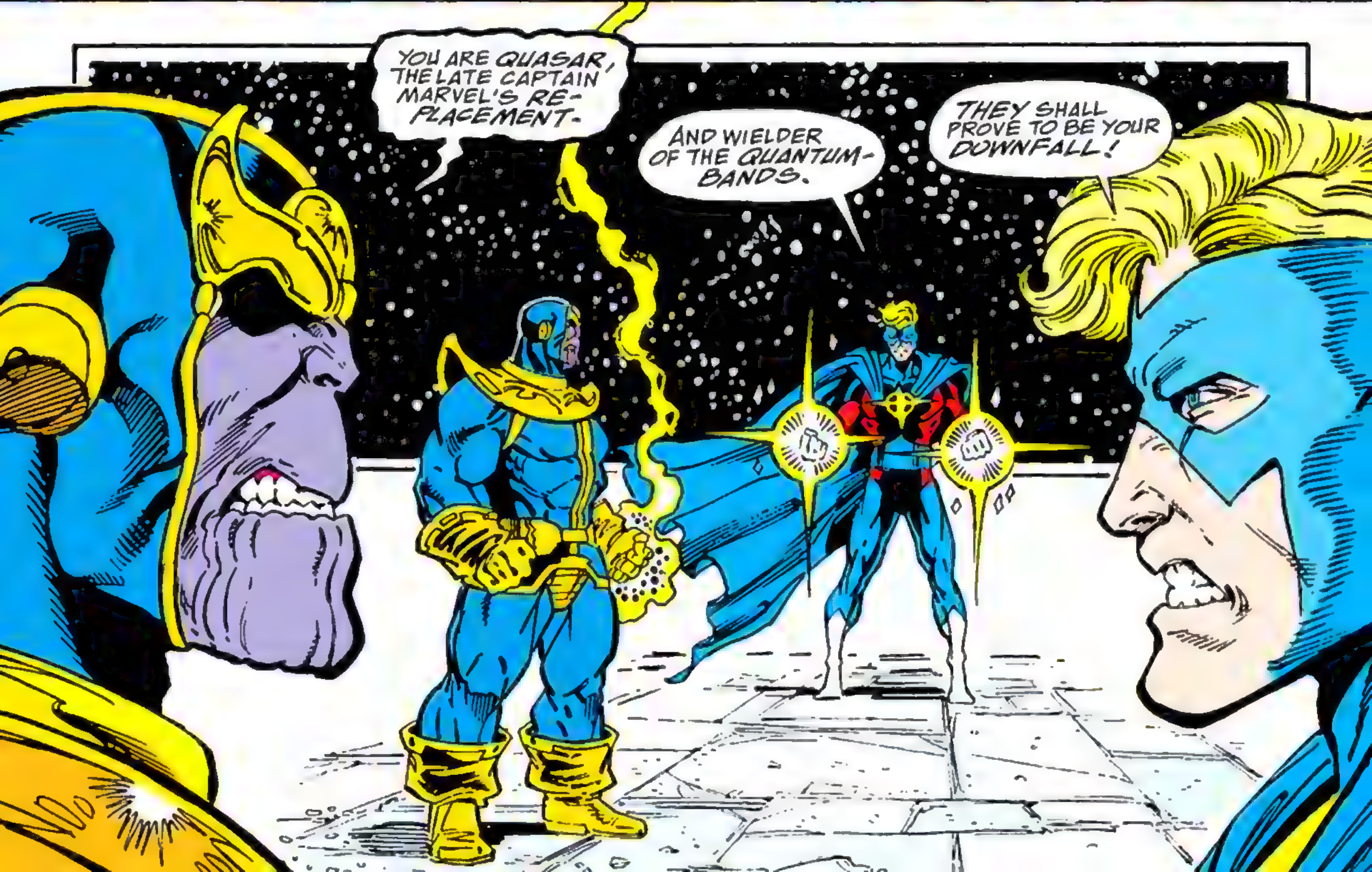
NOT ROUND.  
SQUARE.

SQUARE  
AS IN  
CUBES.

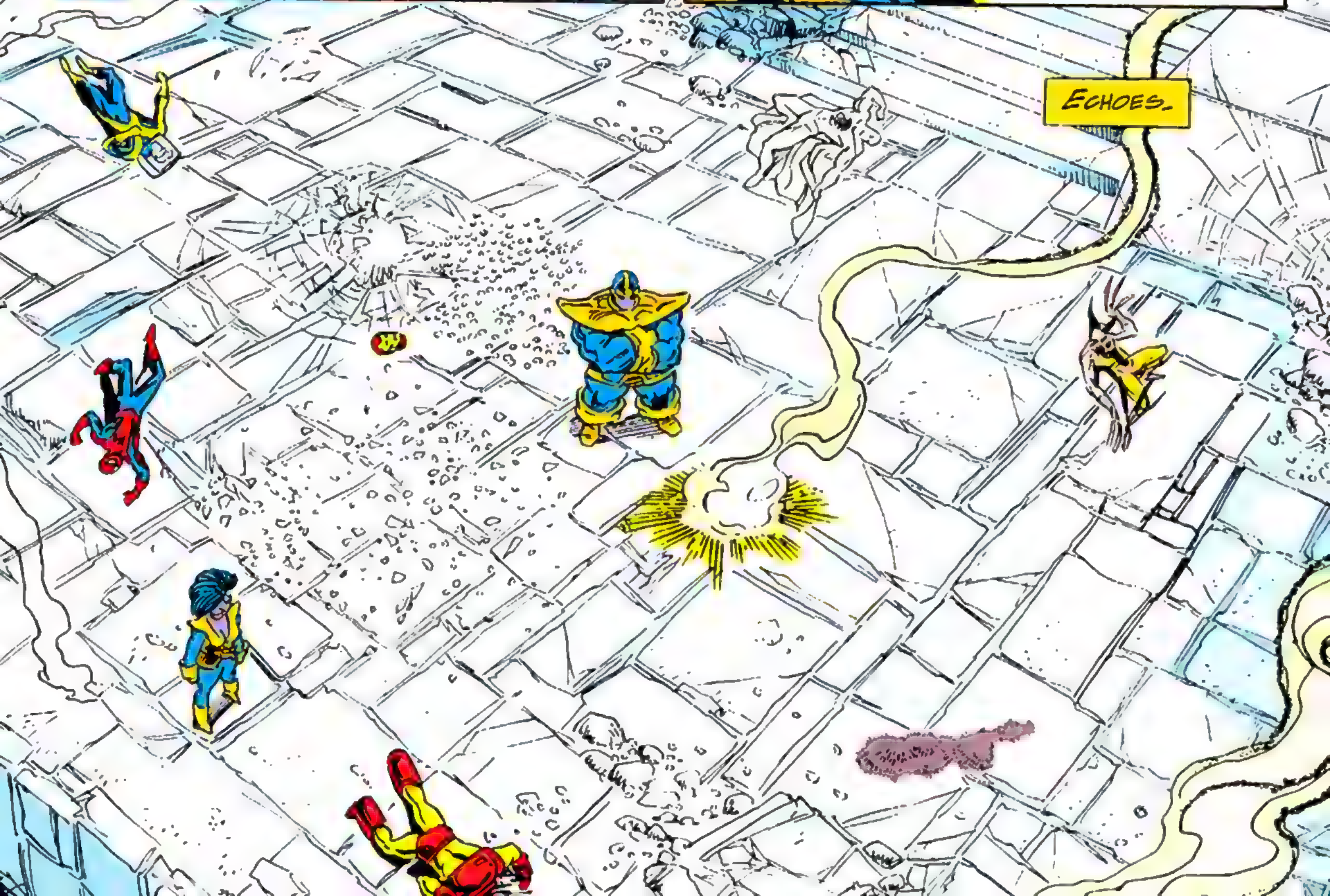
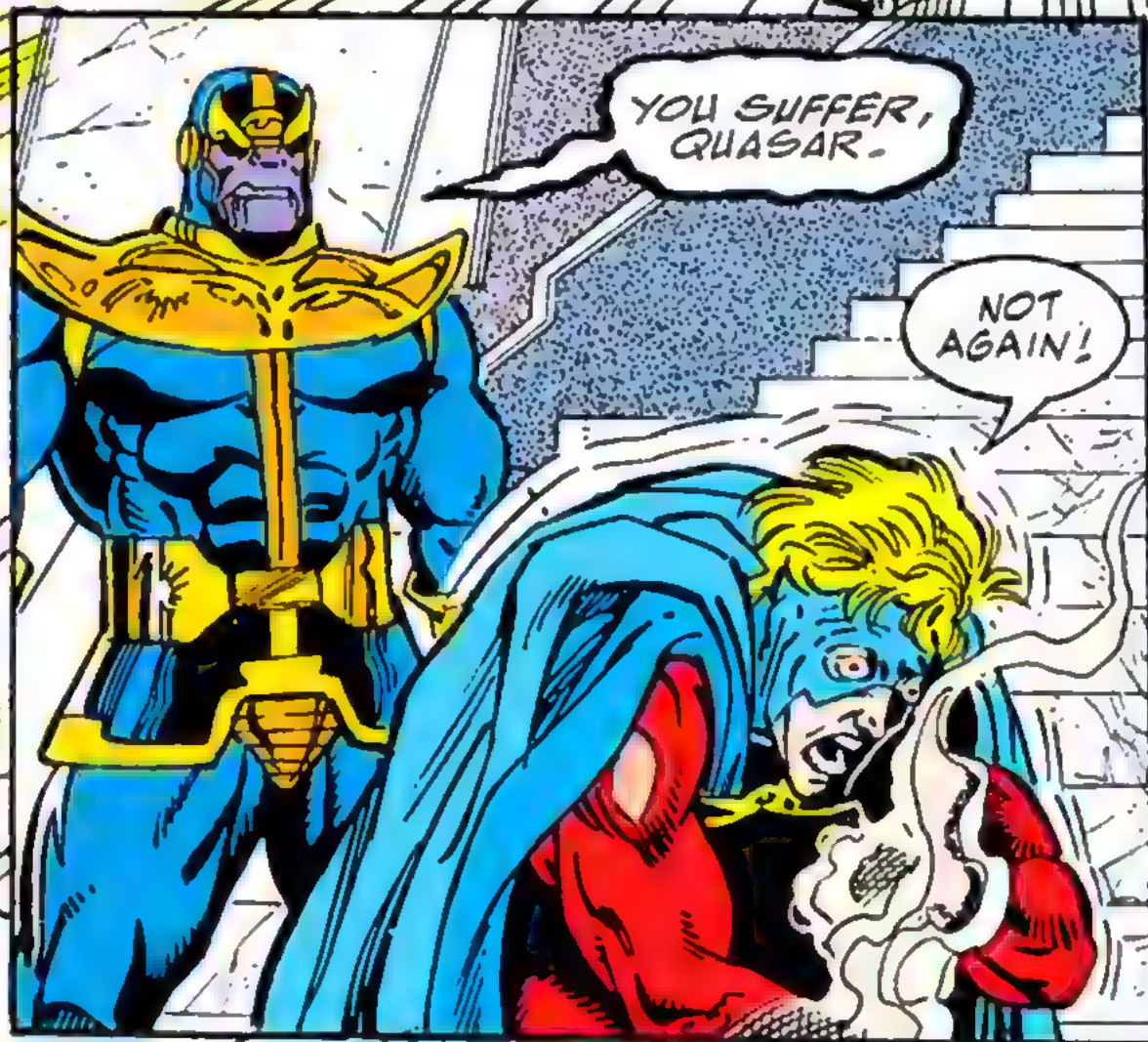
LIKE A  
CHILD'S  
TOY  
BLOCKS.

ECHOES.

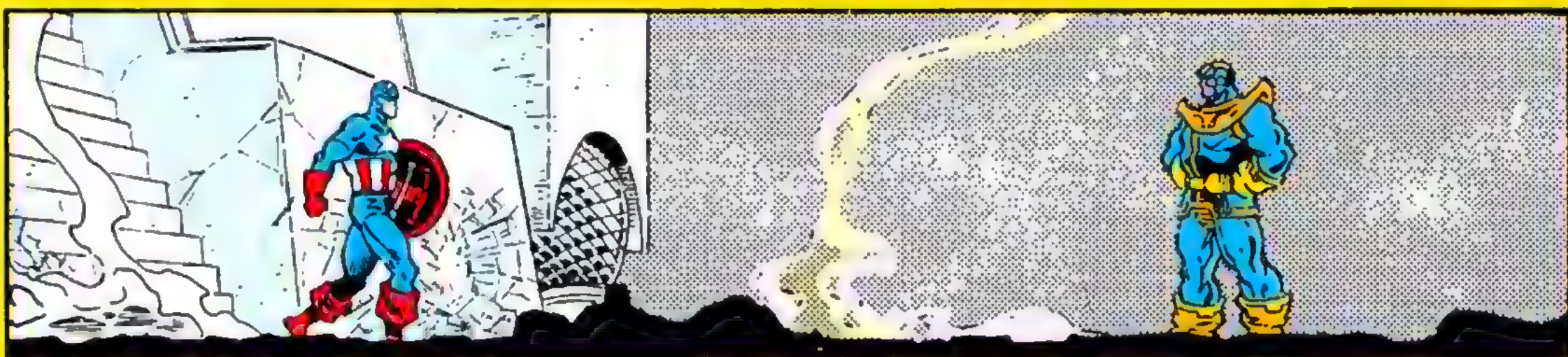




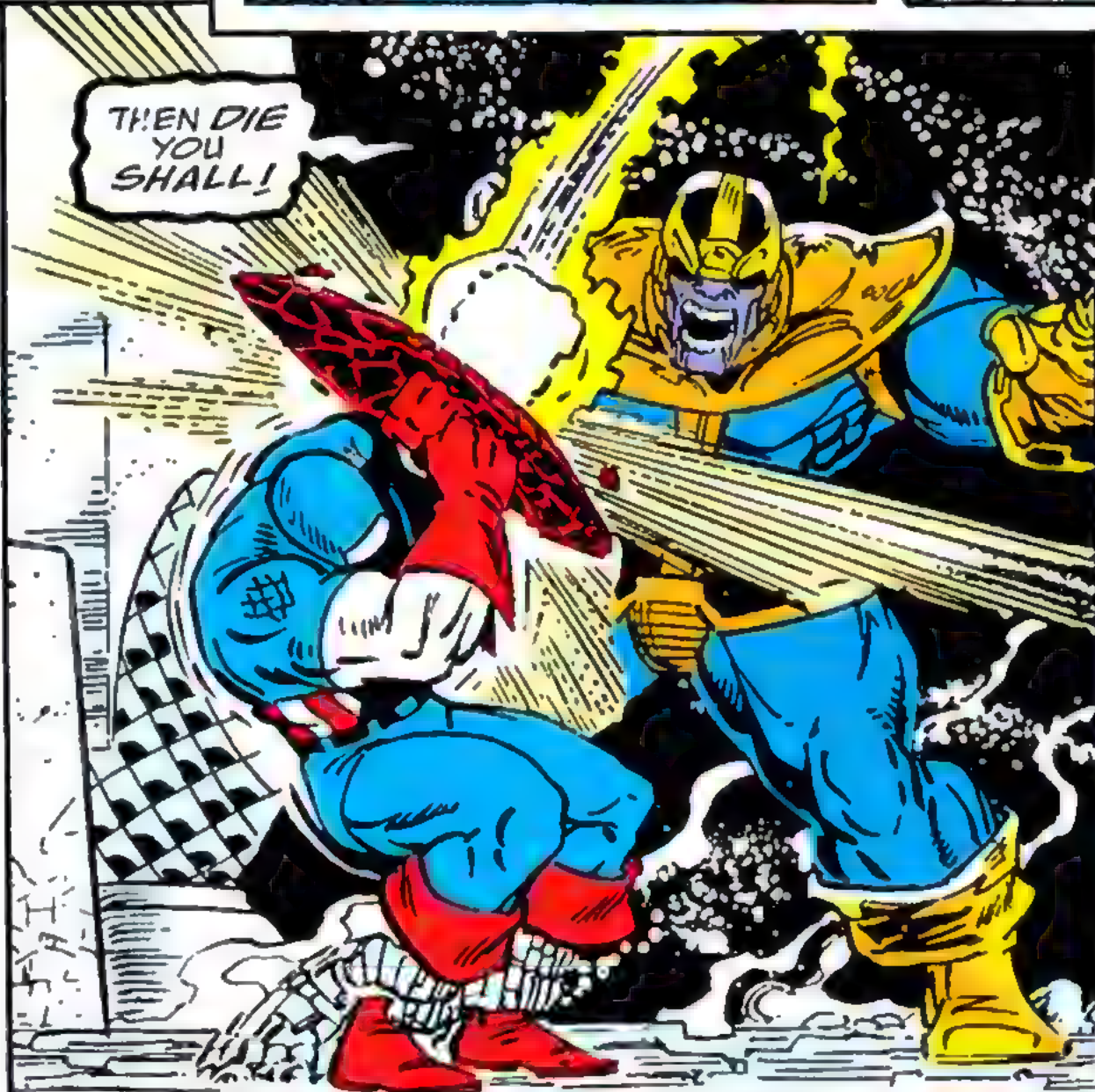
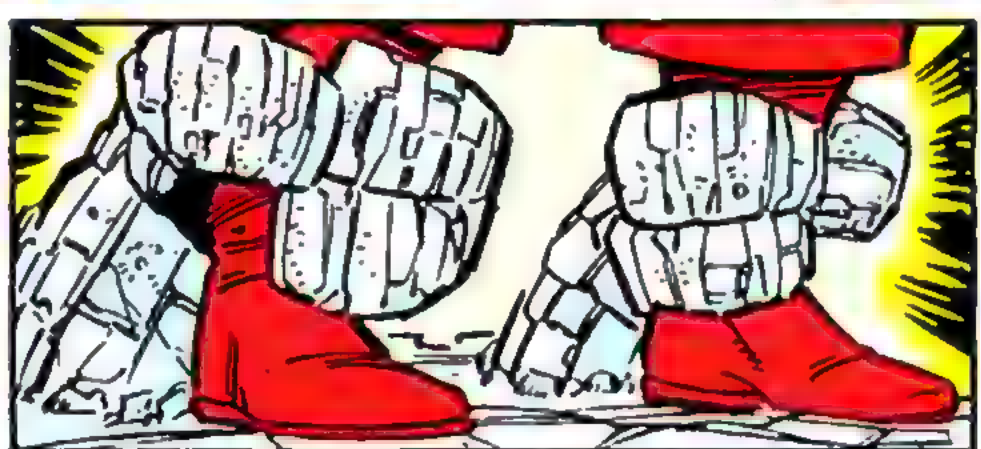
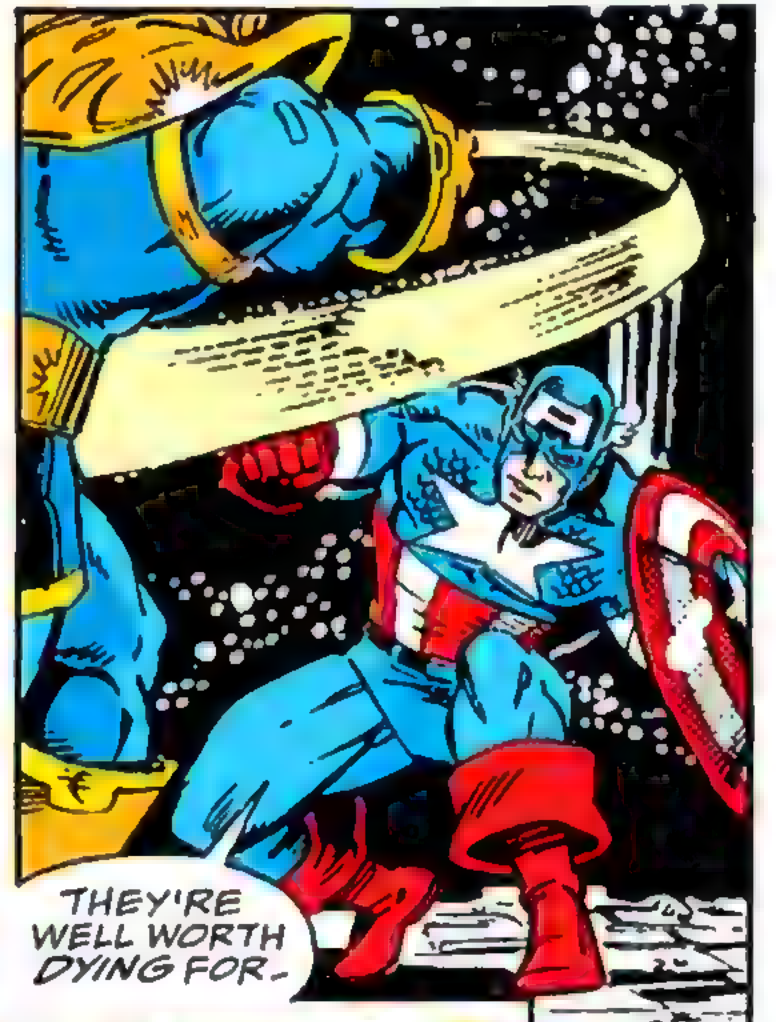




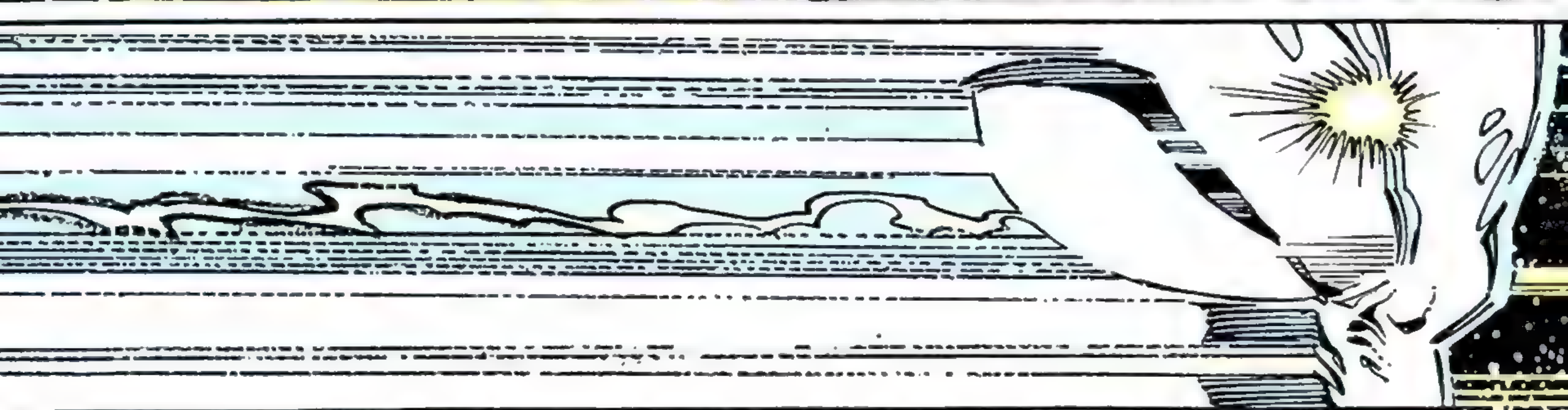
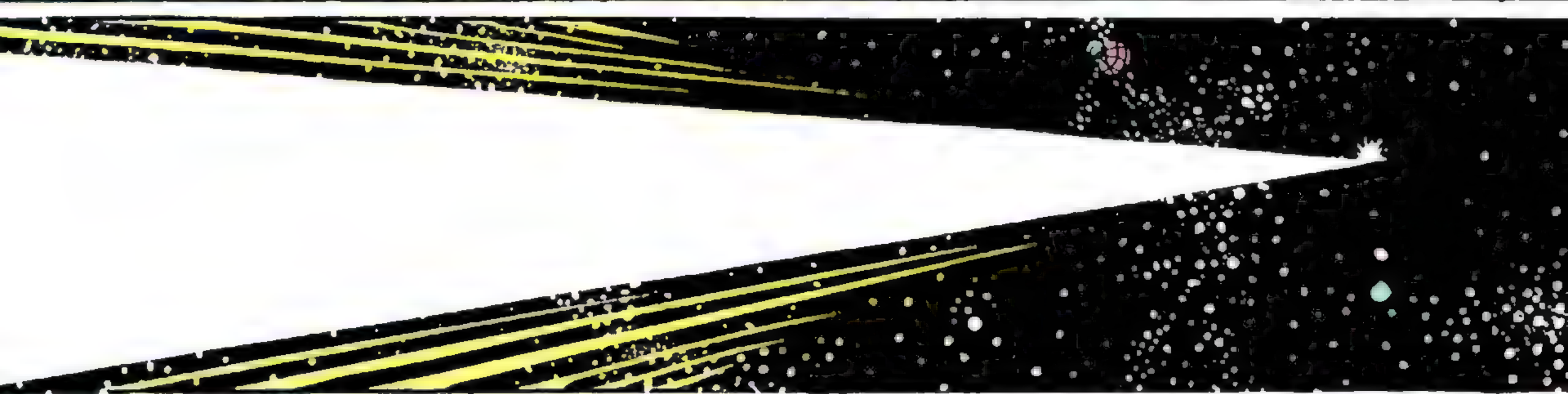
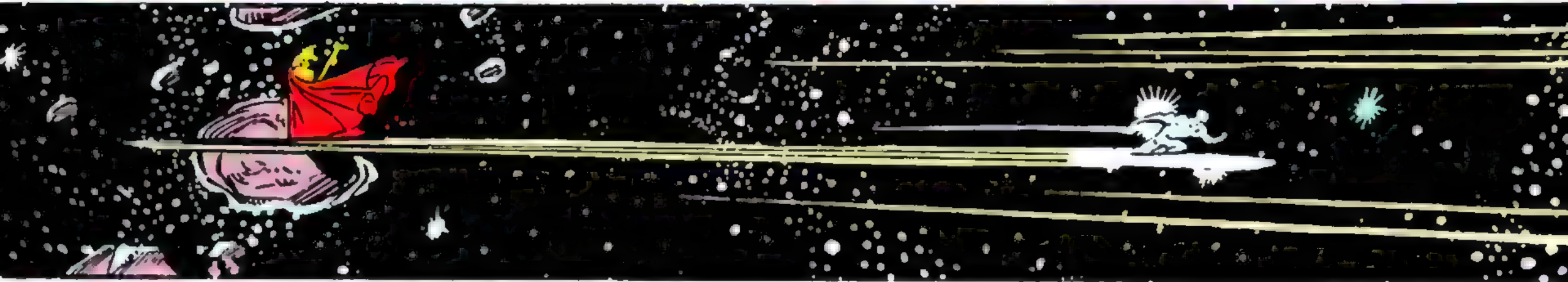
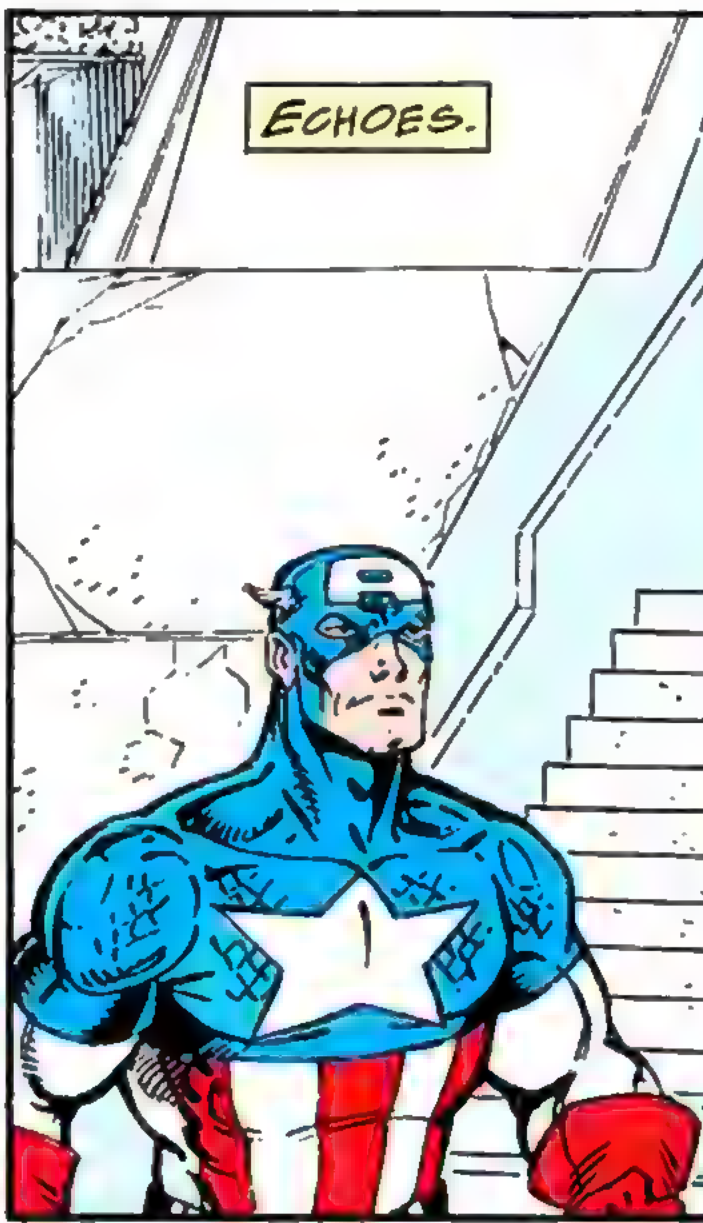




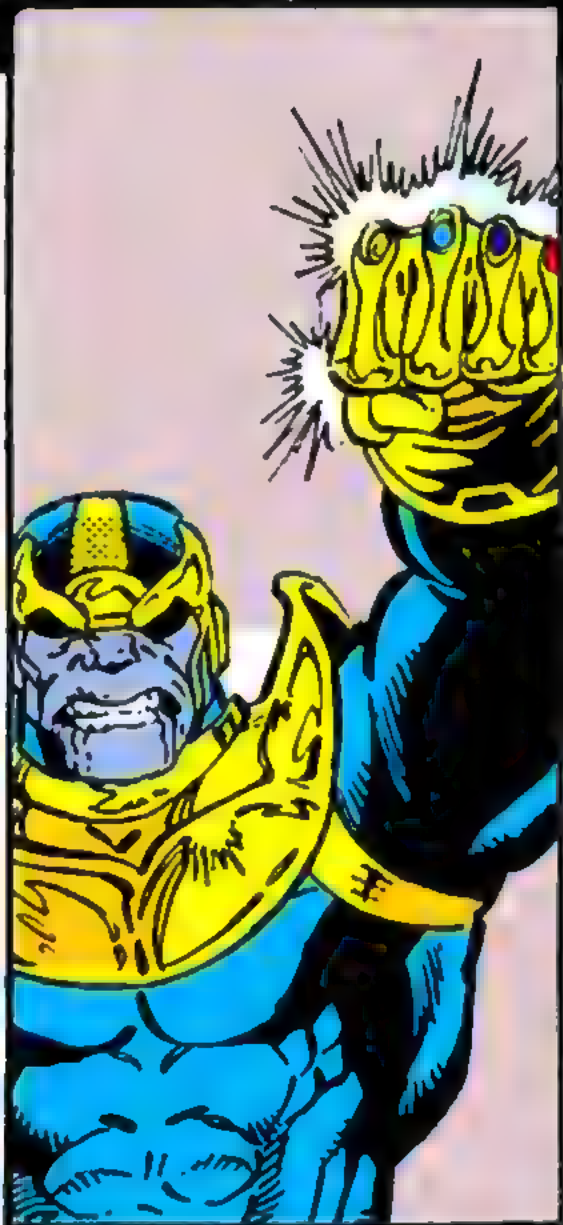
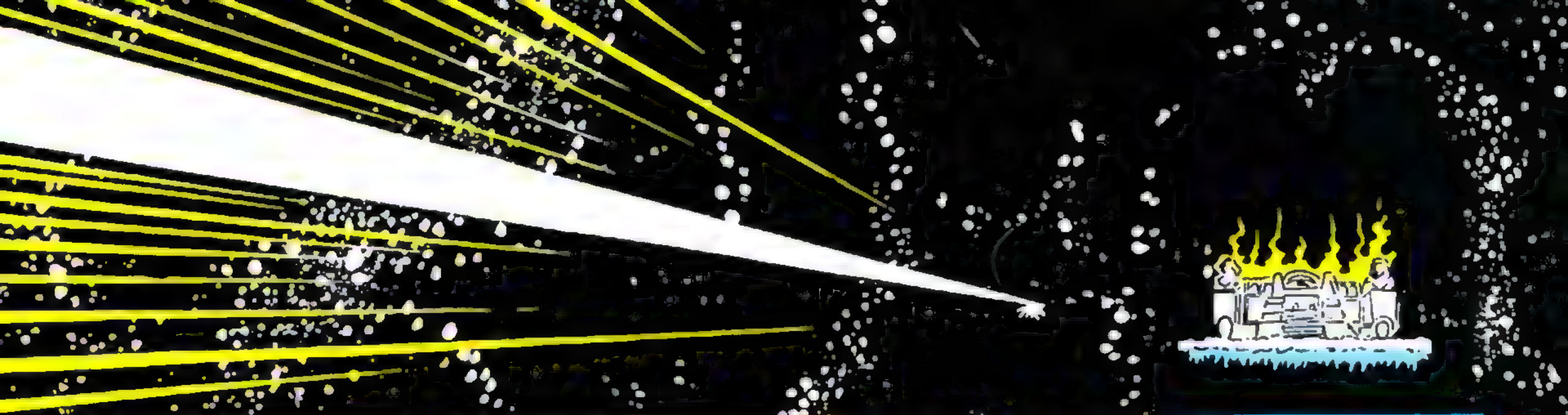








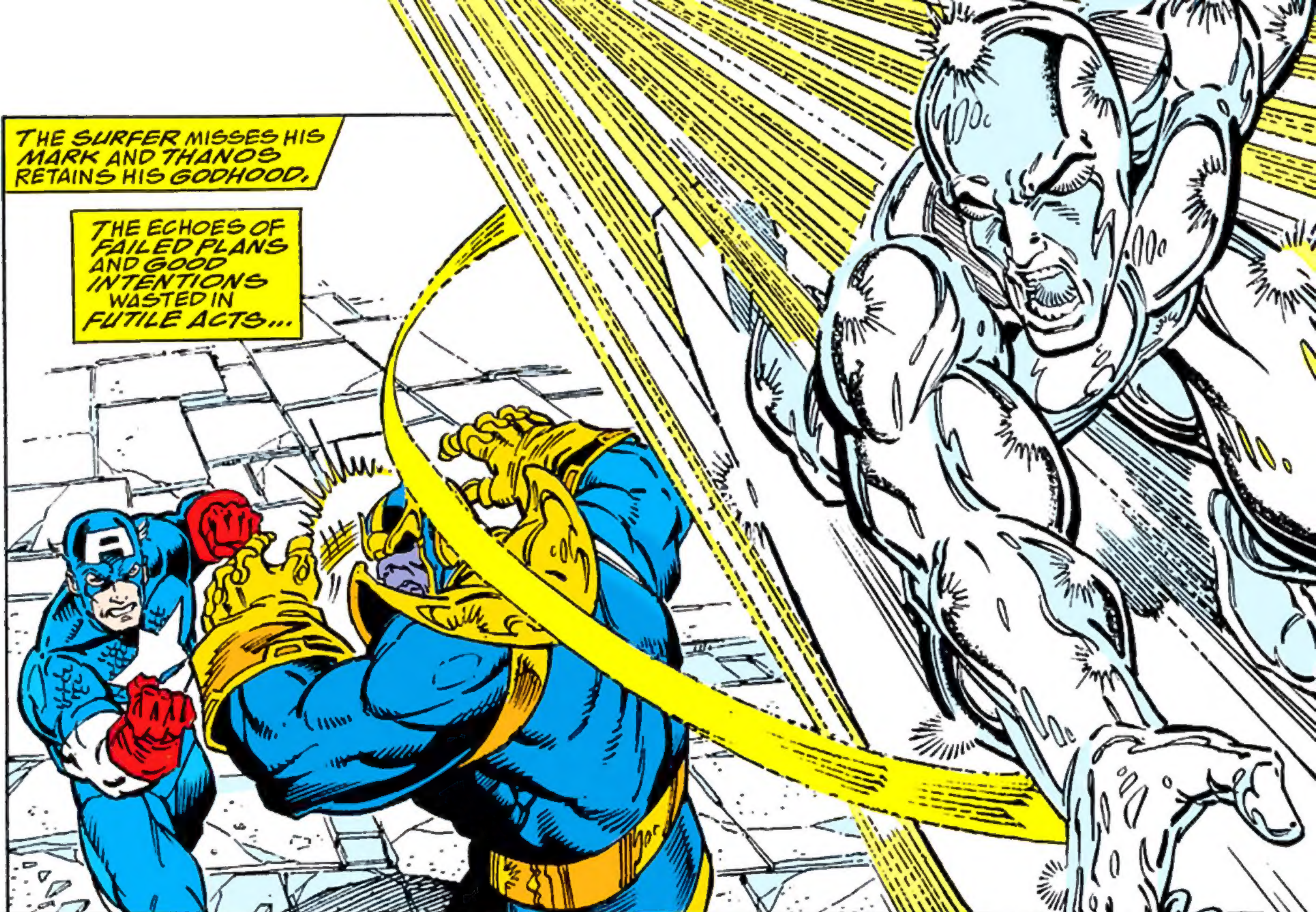




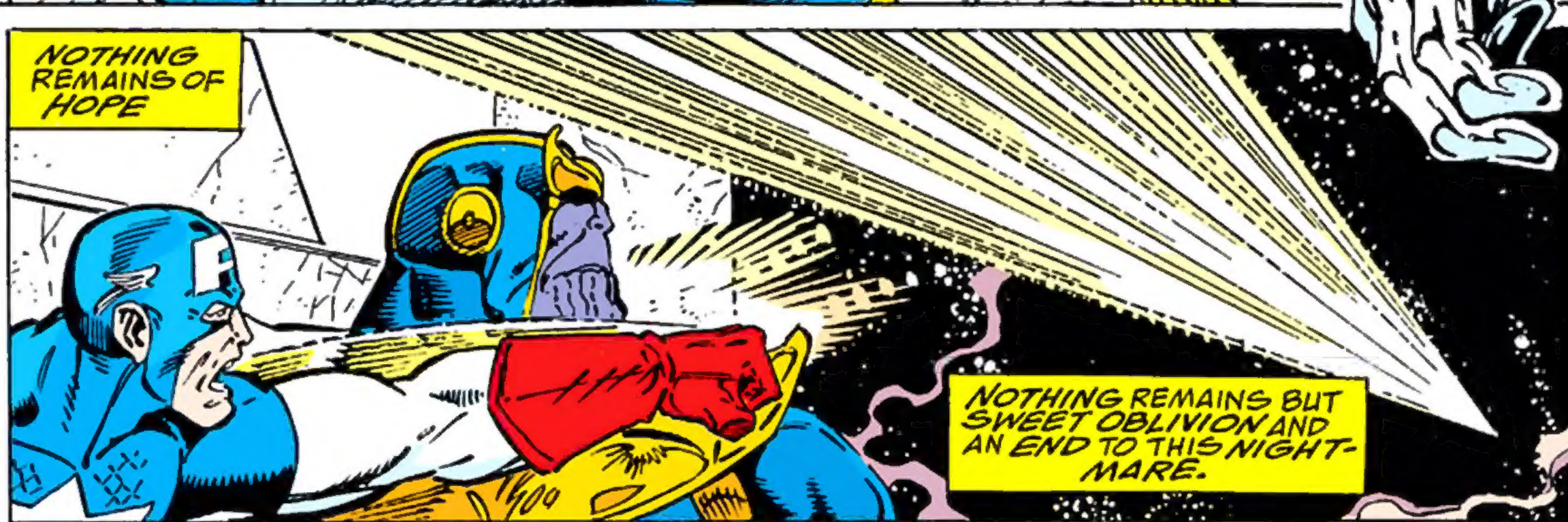


THE SURFER MISSES HIS MARK AND THANOS RETAINS HIS GODHOOD.

THE ECHOES OF FAILED PLANS AND GOOD INTENTIONS WASTED IN FUTILE ACTS...



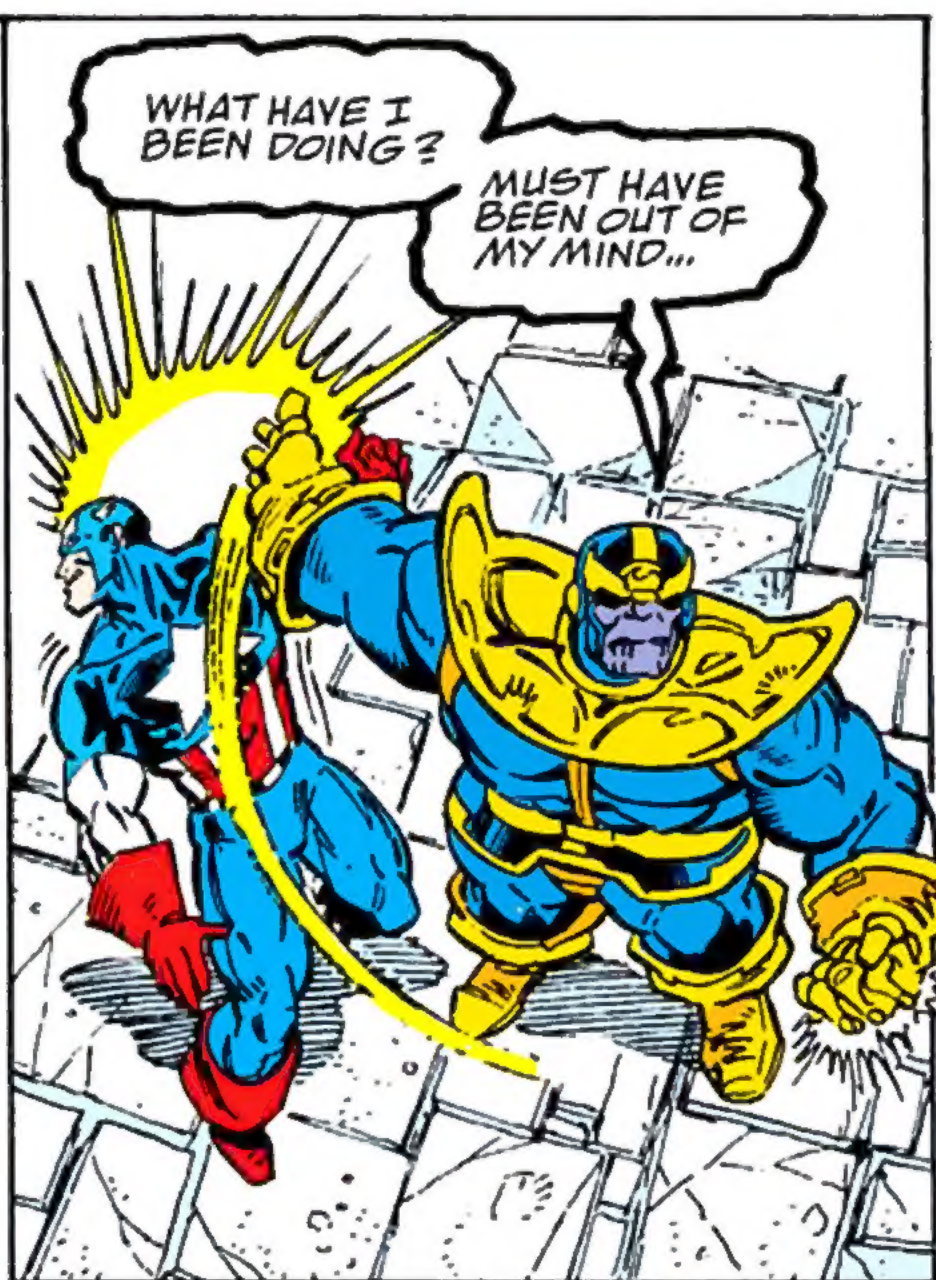
NOTHING REMAINS OF HOPE



NOTHING REMAINS BUT SWEET OBLIVION AND AN END TO THIS NIGHT-MARE.

WHAT HAVE I BEEN DOING?

MUST HAVE BEEN OUT OF MY MIND...

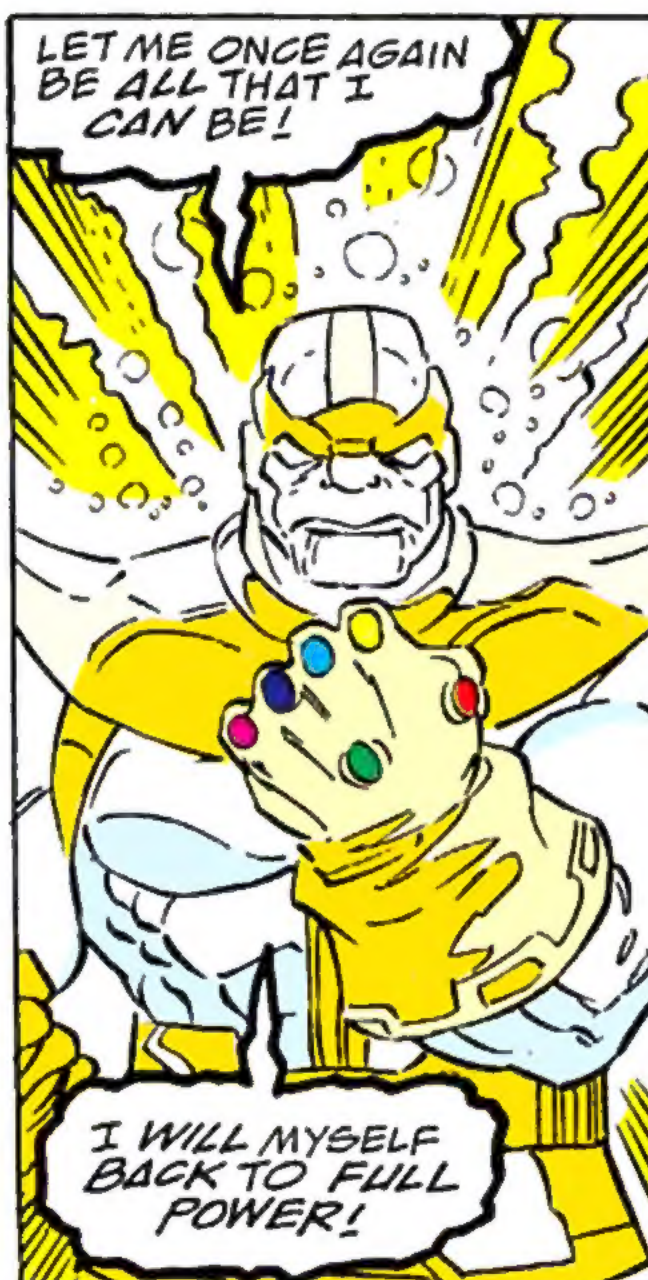


THEY CAME SO CLOSE.

I NEARLY LOST IT ALL!!!

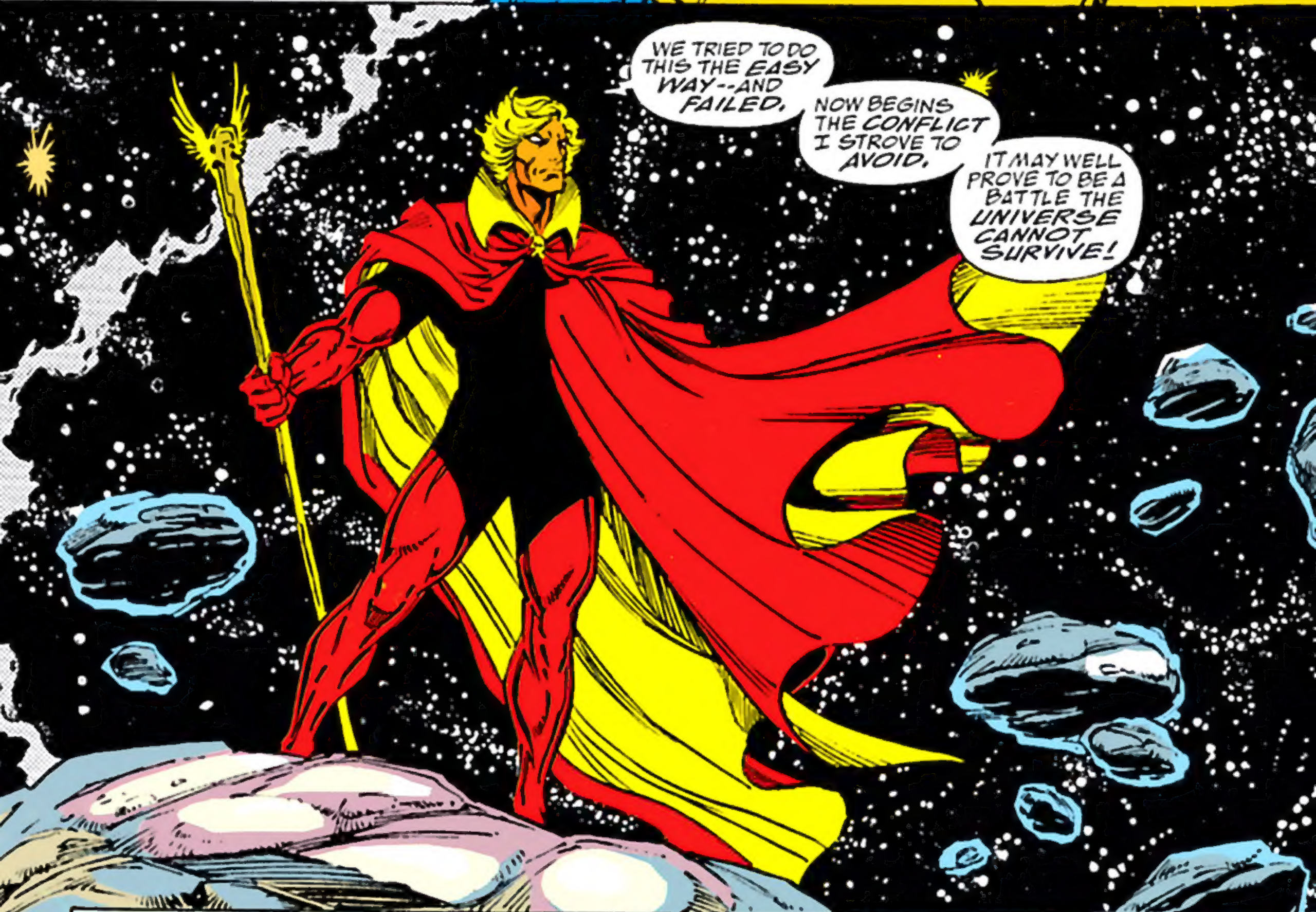
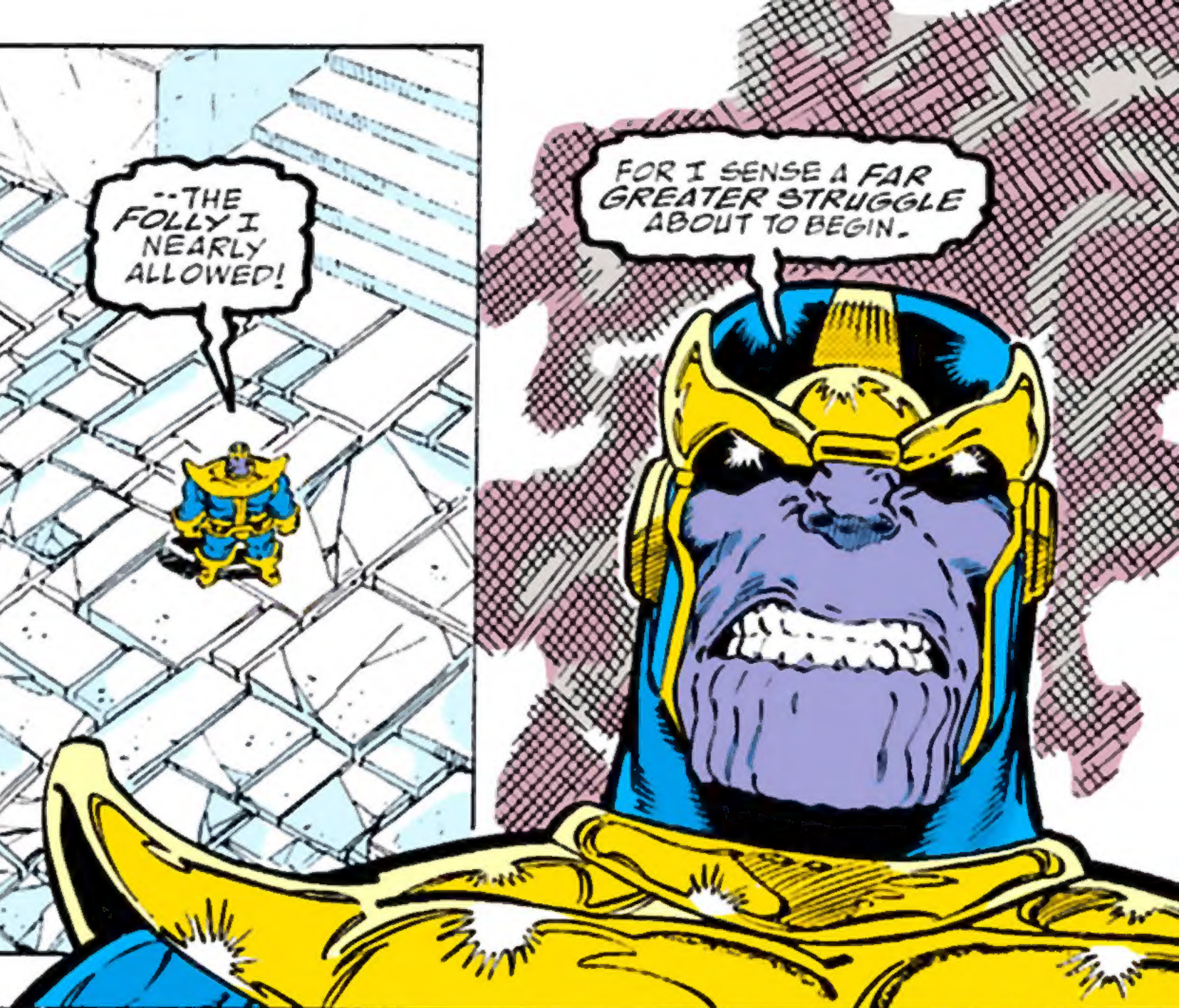
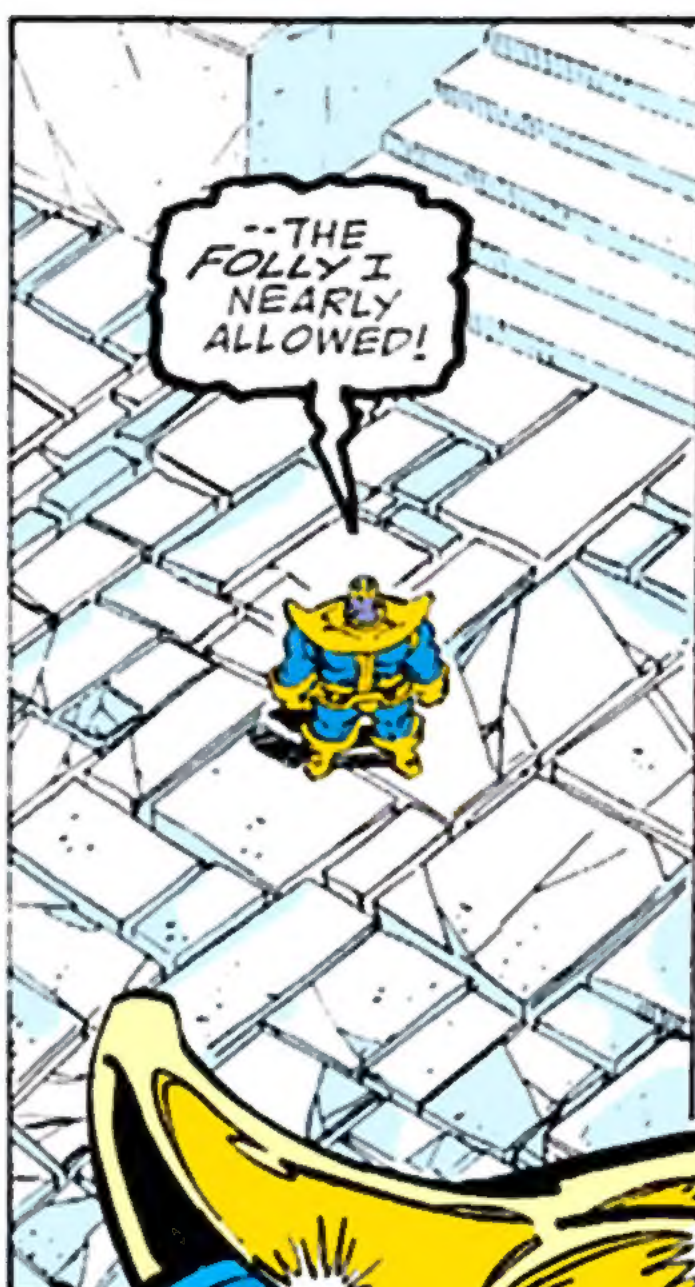
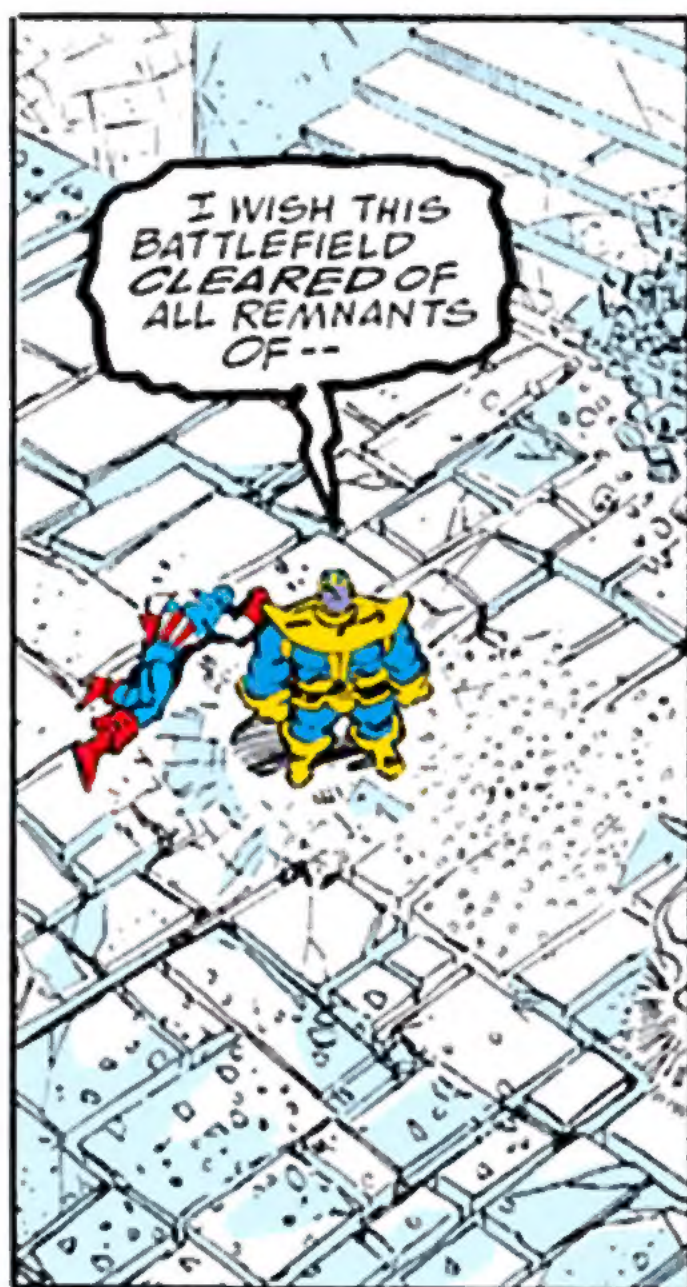


LET ME ONCE AGAIN BE ALL THAT I CAN BE!



I WILL MYSELF BACK TO FULL POWER!







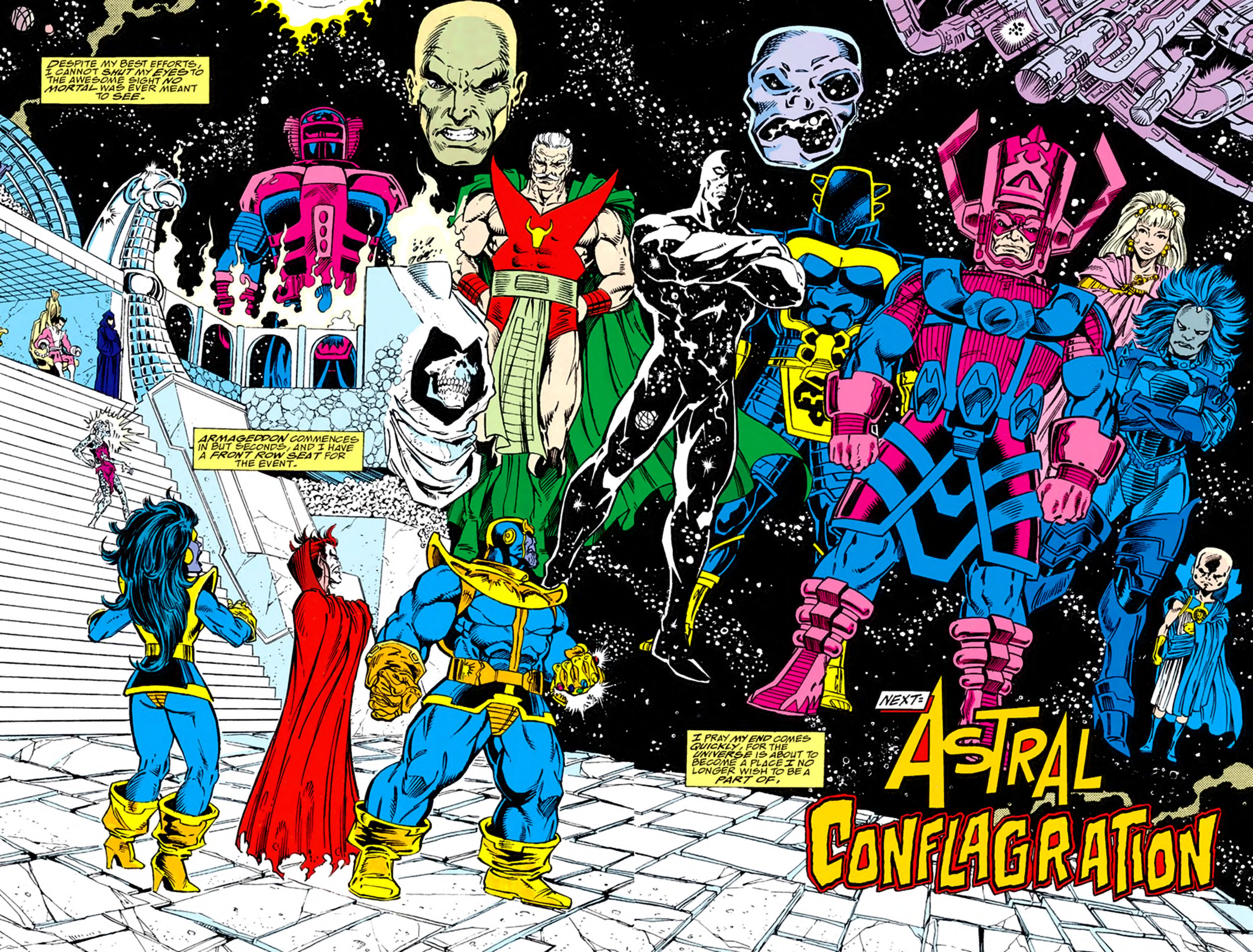
DESPITE MY BEST EFFORTS,  
I CANNOT SHUT MY EYES TO  
THE AWESOME SIGHT NO  
MORTAL WAS EVER MEANT  
TO SEE.

ARMAGEDDON COMMENCES  
IN BUT SECONDS, AND I HAVE  
A FRONT ROW SEAT FOR  
THE EVENT.

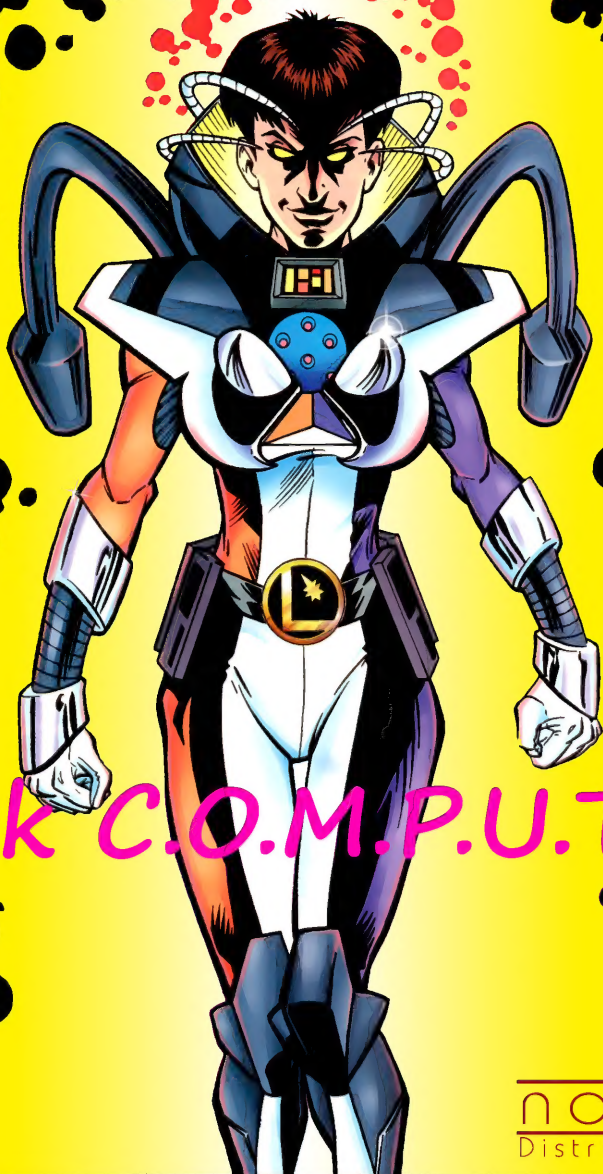
I PRAY MY END COMES  
QUICKLY, FOR THE  
UNIVERSE IS ABOUT TO  
BECOME A PLACE I NO  
LONGER WISH TO BE A  
PART OF.

NEXT:

# ASTRAL CONFLAGRATION







OK C.O.M.P.U.T.O.

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